

4SS

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EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

VUEWEEKLY

PLEASE PLAY AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN

APR 29 2004

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ROLLING UP THE RIM

**BLOWING THE LID OFF THE
MOST ADDICTIVE PRIZE
GIVEAWAY IN CANADA**

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FREE

No. 445 / APR 29 - MAY 5, 2004
[HTTP://WWW.VUEWEEKLY.COM](http://WWW.VUEWEEKLY.COM)

the labour arts festival **May Week!**

APR 28 • The International Day of Mourning

Ceremony at City Hall, 7:00 pm. The International Day of Mourning is our chance to remember lost and injured workers, friends and family. It is also a day to renew our commitment to fighting for safer workplaces, so that no more workers need to make the ultimate sacrifice.

APR 29 • "All We Worked For: 100 Years of Canadian Workers' History"

Opens 7:00-8:30 pm at Stanley A. Milner Library (7 Sir Winston Churchill Square). This historical exhibit created by the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre in Hamilton, Ontario will be presented in the front lobby of the Stanley Milner Library, April 29th through May 20th.

APR 30 • Workers Art Show—Opens 7:00 pm at the Works Gallery (Main Floor Commerce Place, 10155 102 Street).

For the second year, The May Week Festival presents a gallery exhibit curated by visual artist Tom Gale. The Workers Art Show will feature visual art by working people who are not full time artists. Once again, we are pleased to partner with The Works Festival. Runs to May 8.

MAY 1 • May Day March—Gather 11:30 am at Tipton Park (108 Street & 81 Avenue). March to MacIntyre (Gazebos) Park leaves at Noon.

May Day is not just about the arrival of spring. It is also a day to acknowledge the struggles and celebrate the gains workers have made throughout history. May Day was born from the struggle for the eight-hour work day in the 1880s. Workers' struggles are still not over, and so on May 1, a diversity of workers across the world will take to the streets once again to let the bosses, corporations and governments know that workers will continue to fight for fairness, justice and respect in the workplace. The march will also celebrate the hard-won gains workers have achieved over the years.

MAY 1 • Stompin' Chaos: Labour, Arts & Youth Street Jam

Immediately following the May Day March come join Stompin' Chaos—the Labour, Arts & Youth Street Jam, which will celebrate young artists and workers by showcasing the local hip hop talents of Politic Live; a group of politically engaged mc's and dj's, local breakdancers, ATE (Above The Enemy Crew) and a Capoteira group (Brazilian type martial arts/dance). The event will be MC'd by Malcolm Azania. You can also expect giveaways from local unions as well as a complimentary BBQ by UFCW 401.

MAY 1 • Notre Dame Des Bananes Labour Choir, featuring Faith Nolan

Doors open 7:00 pm at the Ukrainian Hall, 11018 97 St NW. The Notre Dame des Bananes is an a cappella choir in Edmonton, that sings songs of peace, freedom and equality. In celebration of May Day and the May Week Labour Arts Festival, singer/songwriter Faith Nolan will perform with the choir. Faith Nolan is best known for her songs that tell of the need to struggle for a better world. Tickets \$12.50.

MAY 4 • Poetic Justice! Poetry Slam Competition

Presented by The Raving Poets. Doors open at 7:00 pm, competition starts at 8:30 pm, at the Backroom Vodka Bar 10324 82 Ave. This year, 12 poets and spoken word artists will participate in a poetry slam competition. The challenge will be to incorporate a labour movement or social justice focused phrase into a poem. The winner will receive the \$100 prize!

MAY 6 • An Evening with Robert Clinton Doors open at 7:00 pm, performance starts at 7:30 pm, at Sacred Heart School, 9624-108 Ave. This year's Edmonton and District Labour Council artist in residence is playwright / musician Robert Clinton. Robert will work with union members in a series of workshops to assist them in telling their stories. This one-night-only event will consist of stories and songs of Edmonton workers who have built this city.

MAY 7 • WAR PARTY Doors open at 8:30 pm, at the Powerplant (U of A Campus). 500 years in the making representing the roots of real hip-hop. War Party has paid dues in the Canadian hip-hop music scene since 1995 pioneering reservation political & social rap targeted to the mainstream. Tickets \$10.

MAY 7 • Metro Cinema Film Night At Zeidler Hall (main floor of the Citadel Theatre Complex, 9828-101A Avenue). Starts at 7:00 pm. Showing: "An Injury to One" and "On to Ottawa Trek." Tickets \$8 adults / \$6 students & seniors.

MAY 8 • Labour Cabaret, with Guy Smith

Doors open at 7:00 pm, music at 7:30 pm, at Westmount Community League (10970 127th Street.) Featuring Guy Smith, with Meghan McMaster opening. Tickets \$10 at the door.

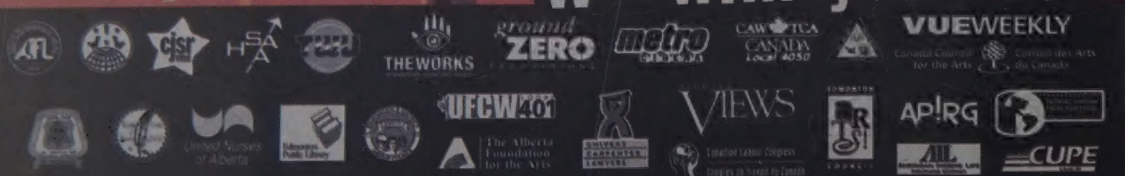
MAY 8 • The Fourth World War & 9

(Big Noise Films, 2004, 76min). Matinees 2:00 & 4:00 pm, at Zeidler Hall (Citadel Theatre Complex, 9828-101A Avenue). Directed by Richard Rowley and Jacqueline Soohen (makers of *This is What Democracy Looks Like*). "A powerful, radical cry from the front lines of the war on people. This film captures the spirit of resistance: it is as beautiful and global as humanity itself." —Naomi Klein, author *No Logo*. Tickets \$8 adults / \$6 students & seniors.



**April 28—
May 9, 2004**

www.mayweek.ab.ca



BRAZILIAN BABES ARE OFF THE HOOK

Off the Hook Laser and spa is clearly off the hook! These women know what's hot and how to deliver.

Specializing in bikini and Brazilian laser hair removal, the goal is to help women feel beautiful, confident and satisfied. "Women are taking hair

ready for summer. No shaving, no waxing, no redness or irritated bumps."

Traditionally, access to laser hair removal has been through a physician and has been extremely costly. "Our goal is to make professional laser hair removal

trained in laser technology. Training was received at the College of Beauty Science and Cosmetic Education, under the direct supervision of Dr. Yousef Shihib, who is a member of the American Society for Laser Medicine and Surgery.

"As nurses, and with their extensive training in laser hair removal, these women are extremely qualified to remove all types of unwanted hair," Dr. Shihib said.

Of course, Off the Hook doesn't just do bikini and Brazilian hair removal. Any-

where you have unwanted hair, it can be taken off.

These women are not only removing unwanted hair, but clearly starting a trend in hair removal that is totally **Off the Hook!**



off because of increased sensitivity and enjoyment. Some women have been getting Brazilian waxes for years and the secret's out that less hair is better," said laser specialist Barbara Salter. "Our solution is to laser instead of wax. it's less painful, more permanent, less expensive and does not have the painful, unattractive side effects that waxing or shaving can have."

Joanne, a repeat customer, was delighted with the treatment. "I'm absolutely thrilled with the results. I can't believe how the hair just fell out. The results are so good I'm coming back to have more body parts lasered. This is something that every woman wants. And the timing is perfect. I'll be

more affordable," said Natalie Shipanoff, laser specialist and owner of **Off the Hook**. Asked why her prices are so reasonable she states, "Because my overhead is low." **Off the Hook** Laser and Spa uses the Altus Coolglide laser hair removal system. "it has an advanced cooling technology that provides excellent results with minimal or no side effects. This new generation of laser now allows us to treat tanned and dark skin safely and effectively," Shipanoff explained.

Laser hair removal works by converting light energy to heat energy. The heat is absorbed by the hair, destroying the hair and the hair root.

The laser specialists at **Off the Hook** are all registered nurses, specially

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you!

CJSR has a few openings for a late night DJ. Either that or a night owl. All nocturnal creatures are welcome to apply.

Contact:

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Program Manager
492-5244
ext. 222

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ON THE COVER

As if coffee weren't addictive enough all by itself, Tim Hortons had to go and combine it with the awesome power of gambling! Their Roll Up the Rim contest may be the most habit-forming prize giveaway in North America—and Vue's Chris Wangler has decided to unravel the secret of its iron-fisted hold upon the Canadian psyche • **10**

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three dollar bill

BY RICHARD BURNETT

Hummingbird Hill

I last traveled to Jamaica for Reggae Sunsplash back in the summer of 1991 and hung out backstage for an amazing week with the likes of Rita Marley and South African superstar Lucky Dube. But back home I told my late grandfather (a political Robin Hood from the African island of Mauritius, who flew to the West Indies in 1964 to visit future Jamaican PM Michael Manley after my family was forced into exile by their British colonial masters) that I would never return.

That's because the island nation is

hands-down the most homophobic in the Caribbean. I have lost count of the "batty bwoys" and "chi chi men" lynched in Jamaica the last few years, many set afire by orthodox Boboshanti Rastas (called "Bobo Dreads") chanting, "Fiya bum!"

Still, earlier this month, I could not stay away from beautiful Jamaica, especially since I stayed in the majestic mountaintop home of my friend, Montreal radio legend Angus Mackay. His home, Hummingbird Hill, is located high above the quiet town of Oracabessa and overlooks James Bond Beach and Goldeneye (the home of Ian Fleming) and Blue Harbour (the home of Noël Coward). In neighbouring Ocho Rios are the homes of music legends Justin Hinds, Keith Richards and Burning Spear.

I swore to my travel buddies Vinnie, Seb and her husband Ron that I would not flirt on this trip because I did not want to return to Canada in a coffin. In fact, the most TLC I got was swimming with an amazing 27-year-old dolphin called Cometta in Ocho Rios. And Cometta was a she, to boot!

The story that dominated the news while we were there, though, happened the same day we traveled to Port Antonio to raft the Rio Grande and visit Frenchman's Cove Beach: boatloads of Haitian refugees, following the lead of exiled Montreal-educated Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide, arrived in Port Antonio, seeking a better life in a nation that's almost as poor as Haiti.

Another time, on our almost-daily trek to our secluded white-sand Reggae Beach in Oracabessa, Seb read me a story in the *Daily Observer* about a new Dutch ban on bestiality to protect the rights of pets and livestock. "So much for the argument that same-sex marriage will lead to the legalization of bestiality," she quipped.

The dailies also went nuts over Jamaican reggae superstar Buju Banton, who was fined \$9,000 (JA) April 5 for possession and cultivation of ganja. Banton complained his sentence was excessive but it was hard to muster any sympathy for Banton whose hit song

SEE PAGE 9

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I think I'm already regretting this...



Having dessert is something we often regret. Wow Factor Desserts is a local company whose product you may want to avoid entirely.

Their employment practices are just plain distasteful.

Some time ago, the Alberta Labour Relations Board called the company "**abusive**". Since then, employees have reached their breaking point, and have voted to go on strike!

It's no surprise. Employees are treated with disrespect. Workers come into work ill because they are afraid of reprisals – and the employer has no sick pay plan. Sick workers should not be asked to handle food! Recently, a pregnant employee, sick and exhausted, was forced to continue working, even after putting in ten long hours!

Wow Factor Desserts employees want a written guarantee that they will be treated fairly.

Wow Factor Desserts owners say no way!

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We will soon be able to provide you with a list of local restaurants that sell Wow Factor products so you can avoid eating Wow Factor Desserts and patronizing a business with unfair employment practices.

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May we have a drum roll, please?

Andy Davies isn't just rolling an oil barrel down the highway; he's making a political point

By CHRIS BOUTET

Fed up with the Klein government's policies and the voter apathy that perpetuates them, Red Deer College student Andy Davies was looking for a way to effect a little change in the society around him. Problem was, the whole traditional hanging-out-in-front-of-the-Legislature-with-a-clever-sign route didn't really appeal to him; he had to come up with something bigger. The solution? A week-long stroll down Highway 2 with a 45-gallon oil drum.

"One day, I was thinking about what it would take for the average Albertan to be heard, and I thought maybe if someone just walked around in front of the Legislature with a scuba suit and flippers on, eventually someone might come and ask what you were doing and

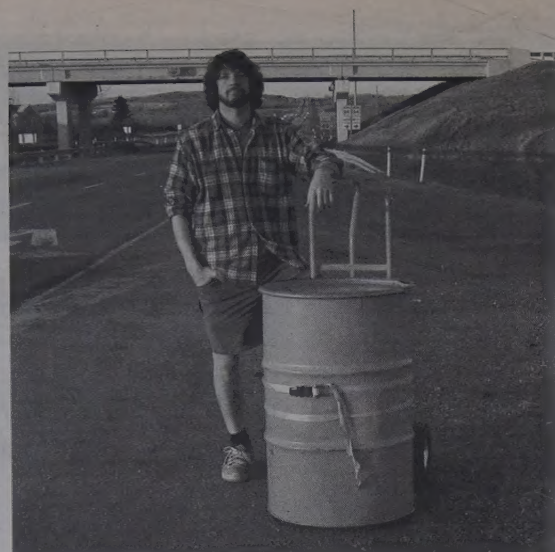
why, and maybe your message would get out," says the 28-year-old visual arts student from his home in Innisfail. "But that didn't really evolve, so I started thinking, 'What if I dragged a big rock?' or something totally outrageous that would get attention. But then I figured that that wouldn't be very practical, so it ended up being an oil barrel. It's going to be visible, thousands of people will pass me on the highway—people can't not know that something is going on."

By the time this article hits the stands, Davies will be four days into his five-day, 148-kilometre barrel-wheeling excursion that will have begun 9 a.m. Monday in Red Deer

NEWS

and will take him to the steps of the Alberta Legislature, where he hopes to arrive at around 4:30 p.m. this Friday so he can personally deliver the barrel to Klein.

Although the symbolism of the oil barrel may seem obvious, Davies stresses that he is not an opponent of the oil and gas sector in Alberta. As a onetime employee within the industry, Davies recognizes the value of oil and gas to the Albertan economy; rather, Davies hopes that his



journey will illuminate a couple of suspect practices and policies in place regarding the industry.

ACCORDING TO DAVIES, the Klein government is turning away billions of dollars a year in revenue from the oil and gas industry. As evidence, he cites the Parkland Institute's November 1999 study, "Throwing Away the Alberta Advantage," which examines the history of economic "rent" generated by oil and gas. Rent, explains the study (rather longwindedly), is the difference between the international commodity price of oil and gas, less all costs of production, including an allowance for a normal return to capital employed but before royalties, taxes and duties. In short, rent is the net revenues generated from the production of oil and gas.

"In the past, the government has collected more revenue from the oil industry than they do now," Davies explains. "Under [Peter] Lougheed in the '70s, business was booming. In the mid-'80s, the industry went bust, and [Don] Getty had to offer rent prices to encourage development and to stimulate the economy, so he cut this rent. But Klein continued the same policies despite the fact that by the mid-'90s, oil was back up."

"It's important to realize that Getty cut the oil industry a break and Klein has perpetuated that break even though economically it's not necessary anymore," he continues. "So essentially we're just turning away billions of dollars of revenue that could be going towards healthcare, education, debt reduction, infrastructure—in a time when we apparently have no money, we're turning away billions of dollars every year. And that's my problem."

THAT, AND THE LITTLE PROBLEM of the oil industry's use of freshwater resources for a oil recovery process called floating, in which massive amounts of water are pumped into drained oil cavities, causing any small oil deposits that weren't caught the first time to float to the surface. According to Davies, while the process is useful, its environmental

costs far outweigh its fiscal benefits.

"I was speaking to a friend today who is in the oil industry, on his way to becoming a petroleum engineer, and he was saying that they recover very little oil from [this process], it's such a minor amount, but it does work," said Davies. "So the oil companies will drill a water well nearby, bring water up 500 metres from the water table, and then dump it down-hole. But the problem with this is that it lowers the water table for farmers. In a time when we're already experiencing drought conditions, the oil industry is taking enormous amounts of water away from farmers."

BEYOND ALL THIS, Davies stresses that the overall purpose of his trek is to raise awareness about voter apathy. "Albertans have clear expectations for high standards in healthcare, education and senior care," he says. "The current government is eroding these values in favour of tax cuts for multinational oil corporations. Klein is acting irresponsibly by supporting the pumping of millions of litres of our fresh water down oil wells."

"I oppose the Klein government," he continues, "but I really just want to see more political involvement in Alberta, specifically within the younger generation. The 18-35 part of the population is almost unrepresented when it comes to voting; we're the most progressive, but we're so disenfranchised with the system that we don't bother. It's time to change that; it's time to participate more in society and the democratic process. That's what I'd like to see out of this."

Upon his arrival in Edmonton, Davies will walk up 103 Ave, down Whyte and across the High Level to the Legislature grounds. Davies encourages all concerned citizens to join him at any point along the way or wait for him at the finish line. Who knows: that oil barrel might be full of candy or something, and you'd feel mighty stupid if you missed out on some free candy, wouldn't you? ☺

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EVENTS

Howdy, labour!

Hey you! You work for "the man," right? Of course you do. And it sucks, doesn't it? It's okay, you can admit it. But truth be told, it probably doesn't suck as much as it used to. After all, you get to go home after eight hours, and you probably don't get beaten very often, unless you're a self-defence trainer or something. Well, perhaps it's time you started doing something to thank all those workers past who fought for your rights as an employee—and buddy, there's no time like the present.

With May 1, the international day for the celebration of workers' rights, fast approaching, a large and varied group of Alberta organizations will be putting on the Edmonton May Week Labour Arts Festival, a series of events celebrating the workers and artists of Alberta. High points among the festivities (which run from April 28 to May 9) include a May Day March starting out of Tipton Park and ending a street party (May 1), as well as the Edmonton premiere of Big Noise Films' latest production, *The Fourth World War*, at Metro Cinema (May 8).

"May Day is an international workers' day around the world; it's not just in Canada," explains May Week publicist Fiona Cavanagh. "It came out of the struggle for an eight-hour workday that workers unions were involved in the 1860s to the 1880s; it came out of the need to celebrate the fight that these workers undertook, but also the need to renew the ongoing commitment in present day to improving the conditions of workers. The goal of May Week is promoting the interest of cultural workers and trade unionists, bringing working class culture from the margins of cultural activity and looking at the contributions that artists and workers have made to society."

According to Cavanagh, May Day is a day that enjoys little attention here in Canada, a lamentable fact that she hopes the week's festivities will change. "I've spent May Day in many other countries," she says. "In South America, May Day is a big official holiday—no one works, it's recognized nationally by the government. I hope people get a chance to engage with all the artists that are in the city and the critical work that they're doing, and I also hope that May Week becomes a much bigger event and becomes a lot more politicized. I think that people will enjoy the diversity of the events that we're offering; there's something for everyone. Everyone's a worker, after all."

As an interesting sidenote, May Day has also been celebrated for centuries among pagan circles as a day of great fertility called "Beltane." So on top of your union's flag, you might want to bring your best white robe and wild-flower laurels along to the party. Being caught unprepared for an impromptu fertility rite can be both embarrassing and detrimental to your, uh, fertility. And no one wants that. —CHRIS BOUTET



FOOD

Don't count your chickens before they're culled

With British Columbia currently culling nearly 19 million chickens and turkeys in an attempt to stop the spread of the virus, will chicken supplies be depleted to the point where the supply/demand curve dictates a major price hike?

For now, prices are holding steady—and, according to the Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC), they shouldn't rise for quite a few weeks, if at all. The Ottawa-based group claims that the B.C. chicken cull won't be felt at the processing level for anywhere between six to 20 weeks, which will give other poultry-producing areas of the province the chance to make up for the shortfall. As well, many of the B.C. chickens are being tested for the avian flu as part of the slaughtering process. If the birds test negative, they will be deemed fit for human consumption. The real shortfall will begin when all of B.C.'s chicken farms' stocks have been fully depleted.

Last year, according to CFC stats, B.C. produced nearly 148 million kilos of chicken, compared to nearly 80.9 million kilograms from Alberta farms. But those numbers pale in total to the national total of over 934 million kilos, which, of course, is a heck of a lot of hot wings.

According to the CFC, nations who are currently banning the import of Canadian chicken account for seven per cent of projected totals. As British Columbia accounts for 12-14 per cent of the national total, those chickens that were once marked for export can now go to fill the local shortfall. But a CBC report contradicts the CFC's claims. It claims that restaurants in Alberta and British Columbia are already feeling the effects of the chicken shortage.

"We've had to order our chicken from outside of the country, as far away as Brazil, Australia even. We've really had to scrounge for supplies lately," sous-chef Mike Boudra of Calgary's Kilkenny Pub told the CBC.

"Companies won't even let you stockpile chicken because there is such a shortage. It's a big question: are we going to have chicken next month?"

Are we to understand that we could be faced with a chicken-wing shortage during the height of the Stanley Cup playoffs? Oh, the humanity! —STEVEN SANDOR

ENVIRONMENT

A fined killer of fish

The federal government has slapped Calgary-based Federated Pipe Lines Ltd. with a \$200,000 fine stemming from a 2000 incident in which crude oil was spilled into an environmentally sensitive area.

On July 31, 2000, the Pine River near Chetwynd, B.C. was contaminated by crude oil that had leaked from a pipeline operated by the company. The company agreed that the leak was caused by a defect in the pipeline. Because the Pine River is a source of fish, Federated was in contravention of both the Environmental Protection Act and the Fisheries Act.

Last week, both the Crown and representatives of Federated agreed to a statement of facts in court last week, thereby averting a long trial. Federated was ordered to pay \$200,000 because of its negligence, \$5,000 of which will be set down as an actual fine, while the remaining \$195,000 will go to an environmental fund run by the feds to oversee the conservation of the watershed and fish habitat in northeastern B.C.

The spill dumped around one million litres of crude oil into the river, killing local birds and fish and ruining the drinking water supply for Chetwynd's roughly 3,000 residents. Before the court came to its decision on a fine, Pembina Pipelines, the company that owns Federated, agreed to pay the town \$4.5 million in damages.

Environment Canada claimed that the decision proves that changes made in 1999 to environmental legislation

are working. The legislation funnels fine money from polluters back into the clean-up of the contaminated area in the form of the Environmental Damages Fund. The fund also gives polluters like Federated the chance to come out of the trial smelling like a rose, as their contribution tends to appear to the public as a corporate donation, not a fine for negligence which caused damage to the environment. —STEVEN SANDOR

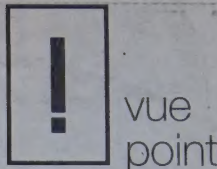
DRUGS

Don't take the high road

Well, it's bad news for all you people who like to smoke up behind the wheel and good news for all of us who don't like to get killed, but in preparation for Canada's impending decriminalization of marijuana, the federal government introduced legislation on Monday that could give police vastly increased powers to charge drug-impaired drivers and take saliva, blood and urine tests from motorists.

According to a report in the *Globe and Mail*, the bill will give police the authority to administer drug recognition expert evaluations in cases where there is some reasonable suspicion that the driver is impaired. If the driver indeed fails a roadside test, they can be detained at a police station while the tests are performed.

"Ultimately, these provisions are about saving lives," Federal Justice Minister Irwin Cotler assured the House. "It's not that we're making something a criminal offence that is not. The problem is that the police do not have the authority to elicit the evidence that will be needed for prosecutive purposes." Police in Quebec, British Columbia and Manitoba can already administer DRE evaluations, but only when a suspect participates voluntarily, perhaps when enticed with the promise of a bag of mesquite BBQ chips and *Family Guy* DVDs. —CHRIS BOUTET



By CHRIS BOUTET

All systems owe

As a very recent graduate from the University of Alberta, I must say I found little surprising about the Statistics Canada survey released Monday that said student debt has risen 76 per cent since the beginning of the 1990s. As the proud owner of an as-yet-unpaid-for \$20,000 English degree, it's a statistic I know all too well.

Of course, I managed to get off pretty easy. The 20 grand I owe is only the product of two and a half years of borrowing; if my parents hadn't been there to help me out with the other two and a half (what, didn't you hear? Yeah, arts degrees take, uh, five years to complete now), God knows how much deeper in the hole I'd be. Actually, I guess you'd just multiply that amount by two. That's not too hard to figure out at all, really.

Point is, my situation could have been a lot worse—and for countless students across Canada, it is. According to the study (which spans 1990 to 2000, suggesting that the numbers could actually be worse, considering the continued trend of tuition hikes), more than 40 per cent of university grads finished school in 2000 owing money; while the average B.A. grad like myself left owing an average of \$19,500, around 14 per cent of B.A. grads owed more than \$25,000. Keep in mind, too, that a B.A. is about the cheapest degree you can get—let's not even get into how much engineering and science grads end up having to pay back.

The study, rather groundbreakingly, goes on to suggest that this increase in debt may be linked to the rising cost of tuition—but less stupidly, it also raises a fascinating point: with so many kids coming out of university with a boatload of debts to square off, will the Canadian economy start to feel the hit of this growing trend? In T-minus-two months, I'm going to have to start giving back what I owe, which I'm optimistically figuring will work out to about \$300 or so a month. That kind of hit to 40 per cent of the 18-24 demographic's disposable income could foretell a substantial slowdown in the country's economic growth, with what all those big-ticket items like cars and condos going largely unsold while we struggle to keep up with loan payments. I know that I, for one, will have to put off on buying that 45-foot sapphire-encrusted yacht that I had my eye on—and believe me, I'm not happy about it.

But maybe it won't be all bad news. With all these shiny new poor kids wandering around, the shrewd investor might expect a new boom era in the non-perishable food production sector. I know I can certainly see a lot of Kraft Dinner and generic Ichiban in my near future. ●

By AMY FUNG

Censors for hire

With the grand exception of cable television, "shit" and "fuck" will no longer be a part of our daily lives—at least not during prime time or on the radio. In fact, not only can we not hear foul language, but those who use it and use it well against major figureheads will be eliminated for "indecenty." Now, whether this crackdown on indecency can be blamed on Bono's flimsy exclamation at the Golden Globes or on Janet and Justin at the Superbowl, one boob or another has consequently

usurped North Americans of their right to think what they will about insidious jokes and exploitive nudity.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has been on a censorship rampage since February, and the upswing in puritan attitudes has become breathtaking. It began with a murmur about Bono's strained Golden Globe outburst of the words "fucking brilliant." Sure, there was little public protestation its wake, but then again, no one has cared about what Bono has to say since the early '90s. Then, of course, came the now-infamous one-second wide shot of something that was later revealed to be a breast—not a real one, mind you, but that's beside the point. The amount of media attention and public uproar following this event was unprecedented and unstoppable. "This is unacceptable," growled the protectors of the public from their high horses. "Our children have been ruined!"

Michael Powell, chairman of the FCC, responded swiftly by condemning the decency-shredding content on

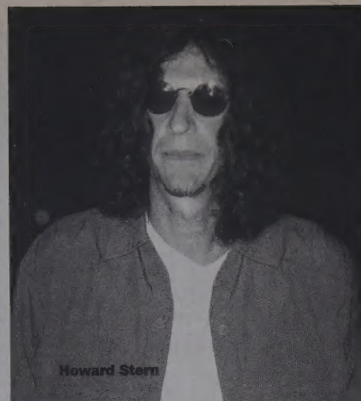
today's television and radio and was cheered on by President George W. Bush and Senator John Ashcroft for his efforts. Consequently, loudmouth syndicated shock-jocks Howard Stern and Bubba the Love Sponge were suspended, fined and fired from a number of major markets. In Canada, even Don Cherry of *Hockey Night in Canada* has been put on a time delay. Alanis Morissette gave a couple of nudges and winks at the censor board during the Junos, but for once, she was actually being ironic.

Free speech is hanging by a thread, but its dismantling is hardly a new phenomenon. Editors and critics have compared our present-day situation to McCarthyism, only it seems there's even more organization and efficiency this time around. Remember *Politically Incorrect With Bill Maher*? Canceled quickly and quietly after sponsors pulled out following some—surprisingly—politically incorrect statements about President Bush and his response to the terrorist attacks of 2001. Last year, comedian Janeane Garofalo's

much-anticipated sitcom was canceled by ABC before it even aired due to her protests against the Bush administration. Even the mild forum of the Oscars was put on a seven-second delay this year in fear of a wave of Michael Moore-esque rants. Things are only looking down; George Carlin may need to extend his list of words you can't say on television.

Now maybe this metaphorical leash is too tight and I've completely lost all circulation to my brain, but I think all of this censorship is a positive thing. It's a dark day when I have to side with Howard Stern and a Love Sponge, but protecting the idea of free speech does not necessarily mean championing its content. A lot of what passes for entertainment these days is a harrowing display of human depravity. However, my protestations are not on a moral level, but an artistic one.

Historically speaking, constraints on artistic freedom has often inspired the most creative artistic movements. After Senator Joe McCarthy's witch hunt reached artists such as Bertolt Brecht and Arthur Miller, there was a dark period of puritanism. But out of the darkness, fresh and challenging writers and artists such as Paul and Jane Bowles, Jackson Pollock, the New York School Poets and the Beats emerged. Broadly speaking, acts of subversion need to be fueled by over-



Howard Stern

bearing censorship. How else could they be subversive?

True, the blatant use of profanity receives a few chuckles and cheers, but it's the ability to allude to vulgarity without ever stooping to its level that is genuinely funny and creative. (*Jackass* may be funny, but witty it is not.) My hope is that if we're on the brink of a new era of strict censorship, innovative linguistic play and satirical wit will undoubtedly begin to stage a comeback. In Denys Arcand's *The Barbarian Invasions*, the once-subversive writer/director uses his titular metaphor to describe the decay in culture and humanity in general. He's right—our cultural empire has declined and crumbled and it's now time to rebuild anew. But let's do so without the Love Sponge. ●



Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)

It's all subjective

What seems just to one man might
Not seem just to ducks

TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)

Take a stand. While you
are standing, I'll just use the
bed. Don't back down now.

GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)

You will be swept off
Your feet by the janitor
Of your wildest dreams

CANCER

(June 21-July 22)

The CD you buy
This week will survive both you
And your grandchildren

LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)

You will find wisdom
On the top of the mountain
But the price is steep

VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)

There's a time for peace
And a time to steal a cow
And get what's comin'

LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)

Dandelions are
Less ferocious than other,
More macho, lions

SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)

I've said it before
But I'll say it one more time:
Never trust penguins

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)

Watch for animals
Crossing the road; it's a good
Way to save on meat

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)

Go hiking, but make
Sure to wear bells so that bears
Know where to find you

AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)

Help preserve parkland
By trampling all over it
Then buying some fudge

PISCES

(Feb 19-Mar 20)

The stars are in Banff
Right now and can't be bothered
To predict your week

by Jonathan Ball, Registered Fraud, www.jonathanball.com

The hero and the error

"Hero" label is too much for Svend Robinson—or anyone—to bear

By SHANNON PHILLIPS

I'm not one for "heroes"—when I'm asked questions like "Who is the greatest Canadian?" or "Who do you most admire?" I mostly scrunch up my nose and grumpily retort that I don't understand the question. Admire for what? Discovering insulin? Playing hockey? Getting cancer and running along the Trans Canada Highway? It all depends on the context.

Within the context of politics and activism, however, I suppose I'd consider Svend Robinson the object of my top-shelf admiration. Robinson is one of those rare activists who understands that while most politics happen outside parliaments and legislatures, we can still accomplish a lot inside those buildings, and forcing a little light into those structures built on hierarchy and exclusion is necessary work. And because a good bit of my own activism has occurred within the partisan left, I have come to know Robinson as a real person—he never played the bullshit, small-talk politician game with me.

But when he was here in January, he seemed tired and even less inclined to rhetoric and speechifying—his public engagements were less passionate than I had remembered. In conversation, he was less measured, and I suppose a little less *political* about people "not on our side"; he was more blunt, pessimistic and resigned than one would expect from a man who has a reputation as not just a first-class radical, but also an able parliamentarian. He seemed more human, I suppose—more fragile and vulnerable.

We've all got crazy stress in our lives, but Robinson must have been working under an unusual amount of

pressure. For 25 years, he's been the go-to guy in Parliament for so many of us interested in a better world, and I always knew him as someone who responded to all takers with the most beautiful humanity. And I guess that's what showed through two weeks ago when he "snapped" and took a ring. There are so many ways we hide our shortcomings and all the things that suck about us—the dark corners of our humanity. Some people drink or gamble; others rage against inequality, unfettered capitalism and privilege and then go to an auction and put something in their pocket that perfectly symbolizes what they've spent their lives fighting against.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN keenly aware of the fragility of the left. Groups come together and fall apart, relationships between activists are transitory and rarely based on real friendship, entire movements dissipate over

time, leftist political parties come to power and buckle to the demands of

the capitalists. We are always in the process of breaking down, picking up the pieces and reconstituting. But what's become clear to me in the two months since Tooker Gomberg died and Svend Robinson left politics is that the people who are doing the work are just as broken and fragile as the movement.

Further, our penchant for "heroes"—which I think might just be our desire for someone else to do the work for us—means there's an enormous amount of pressure on the few people doing amazing work in the name of justice and equality. That, obviously, is not fair, and leads to way too many expectations for anyone to handle.

If there's a lesson in all this mess of letdowns and breakdowns, it's that we must all take up our share of the work, take care of each other while we do it and take some of the burden off our "heroes." ●

Jamaican family who owned a nearby banana plantation, once adroitly noted, "I remember [Fleming's wife] Annie saying to me that Ian and herself and my wife and I were the only heterosexual family in the whole area. I don't think that was quite true but it was virtually true.... [Noël] had quite a few wild parties. The wild ones I didn't go to."

I was thrilled to visit Firefly, which is almost as beautiful a home as Hummingbird Hill. But, quite frankly, I was more thrilled when I caught a grocery boy staring at me at a grocery store in Ocho Rios. When the handsome young man walked past, he rubbed up against me. When Vinnie and I brought our grocery bags to the car in the parking lot, I told Vinnie I was going back in.

"Don't go there," Vinnie warned me, just like he did another night in a packed outdoor dancehall when Boney M's "Rivers of Babylon" blasted on the sound system: "Keep your arms down!" he told me as I danced up a storm.

So, no, I didn't go back inside the grocery store. But something in me wishes I had. ●

OPINION



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Continued from page 4

"Boom Bye Bye" advocates gunning down batty boys with Uzis. ("Boom Bye Bye" means judgment, do you understand?" Buju once scolded me. "Nothing don't change because my feelings about family don't change. And the song has a good message.")

It wasn't always like this, at least not for ex-pats in Noël Coward's day. Coward, the Oscar Wilde of the 20th century, built his second retreat, Firefly, just up the hill from Blue Harbour in 1948. Over the next quarter-century he entertained everybody there: Liz Taylor and Richard Burton, Peter O'Toole and John Gielgud, Ian Fleming and Sean Connery (during the filming of *Dr. No*), Charlie Chaplin, "Larry" Olivier, Marlene Dietrich and Blanche Blackwell, mother of Chris Blackwell, the man who founded Island Records and made Bob Marley an international superstar.

Morris Cargill, a lawyer-turned-journalist from an old and established

ON THE COVER

The secret of rim

How Tim Hortons' Roll Up the Rim contest became Canada's most addictive game of chance

By CHRIS WANGLER

Then Mrs. Bucket said gently, "You mustn't be too disappointed, my darling, if you don't find what you're looking for underneath that wrapper. You really can't expect to be as lucky as all that."

"She's quite right," Mr. Bucket said.

Charlie didn't say anything.

—Roald Dahl, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

And then there were none. Last weekend, thousands of Edmontonians pulled up to Tim Hortons and received an unexpected shock. Those coveted "Roll Up the Rim to Win" cups, which had given some of us reason to live over the last two months, were all but gone. A cold wind seemed to blow over the city.

This year's contest, which coincides with the company's 40th anniversary, was bigger than ever. More than 24 million prizes were up for grabs, including GMC trucks, Panasonic plasma TVs, Schwinn bikes, \$1,000 cash prizes and, of course, the customary coffee, donuts, cookies and muffins. Winning tabs can be redeemed until May 30.

While the contest lasted, it was a doozy. During peak hours, drive-thru queues



snaked around the parking lots, blocking parked cars. The lines inside, rivaling anything from the former Soviet bloc, often spilled out into the Edmonton spring. In a city where drive-thru rage is common, customers showed almost monastical patience. It confirmed, rather eerily, one of the company's most popular slogans: "You've always got time for Tim Hortons."

I am a hardened addict; in place of a junkie's tracks, I have a brown tongue. Since the Roll Up the Rim contest began on March 1, I purchased more than 90 large coffees, far in excess of my normal consumption rate. In total I won five donuts, two muffins and one cookie. That means I spent more than \$100, often on coffee I didn't want, to win about seven dollars' worth of loot. As of this writing, I've cashed in only two of the winning tabs.

How did this happen? The official explanation is that I've been hooked on RUTR since my parents won a Bunn coffeemaker back in the mid-'90s. The unofficial explanation is that I am an idiot. I knowingly disre-

Customers who win feel rewarded for drinking the company's coffee. And unlike other contests, which require contestants to mail in their winning entries, winners can instantly redeem most of the prizes at a local shop. Finally, the bigger prizes are carefully selected to reflect what a broad spectrum of men and women truly want.

(2) Misconceptions about the odds and prizes. It states on the cup, in minuscule print that everyone reads, that "Odds of winning a prize 1 in 9." This means the odds of winning a food prize, such as a donut, muffin, cookie or coffee. (Most of these items, incidentally, are worth less than the coffee.) The odds of winning a big prize—basically quite slim—are clearly stated in the official rules on the company's website.

But the staggering number of prizes gives some participants the notion that the odds of winning a major prize, and not just another crumbly cookie, are much higher than they really are. Take Laura Peters, a gardening writer who ordi-

fantasy that a hapless bum might get lucky appeals to all of us, especially we who "never win anything."

For a classic case from literature, consider Charlie Bucket from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, which every RUTR addict should read. More than anything, the penniless kid wants to find the last Golden Ticket in a Wonka candy bar. The prize is a tour of Mr. Wonka's never-before-seen chocolate factory. Near the end of the contest, by chance, Charlie spots a dollar bill hidden under some snow in a gutter. He grabs it and buys two Willy Wonka bars. *Wham*, he finds the last Golden Ticket.

(4) The cruel irony of a fair contest that you just can't beat. Like Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery." If you're one of those whiners who's convinced that you win less each year, stop your kvetching. According to Buist, it probably seems like you never win because you, and millions of others, simply play more often and therefore see more of those disappointing "PLEASE PLAY AGAIN" rims.

What's more, he maintains that the one-in-nine odds have remained constant since the first contest in 1986.

As for the idea, common among some conspiracy theorists, that only a fraction of the major prizes are actually claimed, the opposite is true. "The prize claim rate is high, about 90 per cent or higher," says Greg Skinner, a corporate communications officer for Tim Donut Ltd. at the headquarters in Oakville, Ontario. "It's one of the highest percentages in Canada for similar contests." The figures for last year's contest (and those before) bear this out: 29 out of 30 SUVs won, 456 out of 500 cash prizes and so forth.

FOR THE MOST PART, people are happy to play the contest, win or lose. "It's fun, it's just kind of fun," says Laura Peters. "You get a cup of coffee for little more than a buck and you have a chance to win something big—or small. It's exciting winning anything. I'm jumping up and down in my cubicle because I won a donut."

But if you are an addict, like me,

you may need help. In my case, I hope it will come in the form of Krispy Kreme Doughnuts—the methadone to my Tim Hortons heroin. The North Carolina-based company opened its first Alberta store in Calgary at the end of March. At the end of the summer, it will add another link to its chain in South Edmonton Common, adjacent to IKEA. More to the point, there's no plans for a rim-rolling contest.

Now that I'm in rehab, I feel that I've forgotten what brought me to Tim Hortons in the first place: the donuts. I'll never forget the day, in August 1999, when I discovered a tray of peanut crunch donuts in a White Rock Tim Hortons. Nearly hunted to extinction for its association with the peanut allergy of the mid-'90s, it was the best donut the company ever made. I bought every single one, certain I would never see other specimens. The discovery, in a mass corporate scenario, of something special, something rare, was much more fulfilling than any prize in a stupid contest. ☉

Timbits: donut trivia

- To distinguish lotteries from contests, the Canadian government requires contest winners to answer a skill-testing question. Most food prizes for RUTR, however, are simply handed out.

- Donut-ese can frustrate grammatical purists. Spelling mistakes (Krispy Kreme), slang (Dunkin' Donuts) and disregard for possessives (Hortons, not Horton's) abound. Krispy Kreme, moreover, uses the "doughnuts" spelling, whereas Tim Hortons

goes with "donuts."

- Like Coke and KFC, Krispy Kreme uses a top-secret recipe, first devised in 1937.

- Roll up, then roll up? In April 2000, the owner of a Halifax Tim Hortons fired two 19-year-old women who were caught selling marijuana at the drive-thru window. The codeword? Request a 15-pack of Timbits, which is not on the menu.

garded the odds, which I understood from the outset, expecting to win prizes I didn't actually want. In fact, I don't even know what a plasma TV is. It sounds like a specialty channel for hematologists. Most regrettably, I forsook my favorite coffee brand, Java Jive, for the duration of the contest, thus blowing my chances with one of the hot chicks who works there.

So what leads to contest addiction? Many factors.

(1) Brilliant concept and marketing. The story behind the contest is told by Ron Buist, Tim Hortons' former marketing director, in *Tales from Under the Rim: The Marketing of Tim Hortons* (Goose Lane Editions, 2003).

It all began one fateful day in September 1985, when Buist met with sales reps from Lily Cup. On a sheet of uncut cups, he noticed white margins at the top and bottom. After learning that the manufacturer's name and technical information were printed in the bottom margin, he asked if something could be printed (such as PLEASE PLAY AGAIN) on the top margin. The Lily people said yes, and the rest is history.

The contest has grown exponentially since the first contest in 1986. This year, the total retail value of all the RUTR cups, which come in medium, large and extra large, is around \$285 million; the total value of the prizes, according to the official rules, is about \$28 million.

narly drinks tea and very rarely goes to Tim Hortons. Like many Canadians, she buys eight or nine coffees during the contest because it's fun and easy to win. But while she's generally very sharp about contest probabilities, her ideas about the RUTR odds are not exactly accurate. "There's almost 25 million winning cups," she says. "Obviously there's about twice as many non-winning cups."

Well, not really. One of the key statistics not provided on the cup or in the rules is the number of cups total, 220 million (totaling about 84.5 million litres of coffee). This means there are almost 10 times as many losing cups as winners.

(3) Urban legends. In spite of its growing size (2,300 stores in Canada and 185 in the U.S.), Tim Hortons has always been a community business, based on the concept of the local coffee shop. The spirited *Kaffeeklatsch* around contest time occasionally creates fantastic yarns about unlikely heroes. Not all of them are true.

I heard two while researching this story, one from Kelowna and one from Edmonton. Both are basically the same. The local one was related to me by a manager at one of the Edmonton Tim Hortons. She said that her husband knew a guy who found a cup blowing around outside the Kingsway branch. He grabbed it, rolled it up and won a cool \$1,000. Is it true? Perhaps it doesn't matter. The Frank Capra-esque

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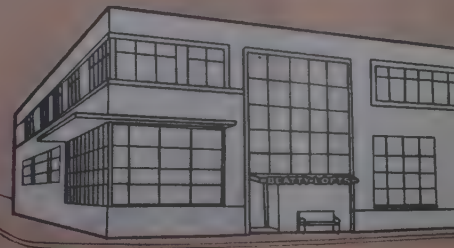


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By DARREN ZENKO

Playdium out

So, word around town is that Playdium's going tits up. I'm surprised it's taken this long; the arcade—oh, sorry; I mean, *location-based family entertainment*—industry has been slowly sucking swampwater for years, and the whole Playdium concept was kind of the last gasp. Dress it up, *funk* it up, make it a high-tech, zingy and (most importantly) *licensed* funzone, and maybe folks will forget the bad old image of the stripmall video arcade.

Didn't work for long. The novelty wore off, and there was really nothing Playdium and places like it could do about it; the electronic amusement companies were (and are) steadily abandoning the arcade business in favour of the insanely more profitable home consoles, so there was less and less quality product to be novel with.

I'll miss (or at least will no longer have cause to appreciate) the whole boozing-at-the-cabinet side of things, but that loss is offset by the fact that the whole coin-op business has basically moved into the bars, anyway. I'm just happy Playdium can now join its father and grandfather, the penny arcade and the Pac-Man parlour, in the shadowy realm of game-centre notoriety, and its memories can become reminiscences and, from there, legends. Because let's face it: I did more ridiculous shit in that place than my mother ever dreamed I'd do at the old Pit Boss arcade on Victoria Trail.

Ah, the Pit Boss. What a rad name for a scuzzy, blacklight-painted, back-entrance suburban strip-mall video arcade. Some of you former—or current; who knows?—Bannermanians, Hairsiners, Frasersites and Kirknessans may remember the joint. We were all, of course, forbidden to go there. But it had *Gyruss* and *Rush'n Attack*, and *Mr. Do* and *Ikari Warriors*. It had this one cool game, which I've never seen since, called *Great Swordsman*, and a pool table in back where the Drugs were Pushed on Schoolkids. It also had a *Sinistar* machine, and I vividly remember a kid named Dwayne—bad news, tough as nails, wore those studded leather gloves with the cut-off fingers in *elementary school*—literally climbing the cabinet as the hyperinsanity of the game overtook him, screaming back in defiant mockery of the synthesized voice:

SINISTAR: Beware! I live!

DWAYNE: Who gives! A shit?

But as far as memories of rene-gadism go, the worst thing I ever did at Pit Boss (besides the simple act of going there) was blow a whole week's allowance in one afternoon of videogames. I'll never forget that feeling, standing there beside the *Knuckle Joe* machine, hefting the weight of FIVE DOLLARS IN QUARTERS. It was organic, luscious; the money didn't clink or jingle or rattle, it *slithered* in

your hands, heavy like a kitten. God, it felt good. Whenever I hold a lot of change in my hands now, I get a little depressed remembering the almost orgasmic (I suppose; I hadn't started beating off yet) pleasure I got from holding that many coins at once. Playdium, with their clever little swipe cards, took those sad moments away from me, at least.

And what did it give me in return?



Um... you mean, besides a motion-capture karate game that never worked right and was replaced with a *Dance Dance Revolution*, a skydiving game that never worked right and was replaced with a *Dance Dance Revolution*, a pony-riding simulator and

a fully stocked bar? Nothing. That was enough. I don't know what it was about that place—maybe it was the nonstop noise and flashing lights triggering some sort of bizarre seizure, maybe it was the fact that I only ever went there for Special Events where my drinks were subsidized or wholly paid for, but I sure got up to some stupid stuff in that sci-fi pleasure dome.

For starters, Playdium was the first place I ever splurged out and played *House of the Dead* in two-gun style, like a John Woo-vian action hero, using both the pink and blue pistols; when one side died, I pretended I'd had that arm gnawed off by zombies. Playdium was also the first place I ever played *Drunk Driver*—a challenging alternate mode for the sit-down Formula One (or was it stock-car?) game where the players hold a beer in each hand and steer with their knees—and the first place I ever saw three institutional-sized banquet tables packed geometrically dense with pre-poured shots of sambuca. It's the first place I ever spit sambuca over an "The Edmonton Sun Celebrates 25 Years!" ice sculpture, and the first place I ever accidentally speed-dialed my cellphone while trying to get a girl to show me her breasts and left a "Take your shirt off! Take your shirt off!" message on my parents' answering machine.

Wow. Good times... good times. Adieu, Playdium. Without you, there'll be an empty void in my life that will only be filled—indeed, for the most part has been filled—by two big bottles of screwtop red wine, a copy of *Morrowind* and a screen-blurring veil of hot tears of shame. ☹

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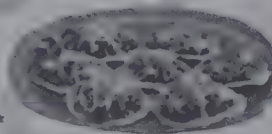
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Café Orleans

12208 Jasper Ave • 452-3160

The menu at Café Orleans has a wide variety of standard N'awlins-style food, which always turns my culinary crank. Kate starts with a spicy chicken salad, while I can't take my eyes off the chicken and sausage gumbo. A cup is \$4.95 but the bowl costs just a buck more, and I've always been a sucker for the upsell. I'm soon having second thoughts about my decision, but not because the gumbo isn't satisfactory—on the contrary, the thick, hearty, ultra-spicy mix is a real attention-get-

ter, leaving my nose a little runny and my nasal passages incredibly clear—but strictly because of its size. I take a few big swigs of my Buffalo draft to combat the lingering burn. The spicy chicken salad is generally a hit too, the crunchy candied pecans offering a textural balance with the tender, fiery chicken. One small beef about the salad: the orange vinaigrette is on the watery side and pools up on the bottom of the plate. Somewhere in the middle of the evening, it feels as though the ceiling is caving in. We speculate wildly as to what's going on until I remember that Arthur Murray's is directly overhead and Fridays are apparently a big night in Edmonton's dance class scene. The pounding subsides quickly and before I know it, our blackened lamb rack and rice and beans are at the table. The lamb, served with a cinnamon-flavoured sauce, is awesome—tender and per-

fectedly medium rare with that strong, distinctive taste. As for the rice and beans... well, it's not the vegetarian dish I had imagined, what with the pieces of smoky-tasting sausage accompanying it. Not that I have a problem with that. We've already decided that the bread pudding is a must. It's a relatively light and delicious version of the renowned sweet, unlike the horrible clump of dense bread I sampled a few years back at one of the more popular downtown steakhouses. **Average Price: \$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/16/04)

CUL-INA

9914-89 Ave • 437-5588

A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories like day dishes (Culoina is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeine, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hotpot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at Culoina means a mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange ginger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large, browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 04/01/04)

DARIEN'S COCKTAILS AND FINE FOODS

5552 Calgary Trail South (Plaza 55) • 439-8675

Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they consist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with



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Italian for big eaters

Gorging on a seven-course pranzo at the Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre

By DAVID DiCENZO

"Do you guys want to start?" one of the servers at the Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre asks us.

Kate and I look at each other, shrug, and then turn back to her.

"Sure," I say, with more than a hint of uncertainty.

"Is this your first time here?" she inquires.

"Can you tell?" I joke.

It is indeed our debut appearance at the Italian community centre for the massive midday meal, served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Sunday. I first heard of this decadent "pranzo" (brunch) through local food writers Judy Schultz and Mary Bailey, who included a nice blurb about the chef Sergio Re's weekly gathering in their book *The Food Lover's Trail Guide to Alberta*.

I've been dying to try it ever since.

Though I'm surrounded by my parents' countrymen/women, I'm actually a little bit uncomfortable. You see, much of the crowd in the huge banquet hall has just come from church and, as usual, I feel underdressed. A friendly staff member assures me it's no big deal and sure enough, I become somewhat more at ease as the odd person sporting casual attire comes in for this wicked seven-course spread.

Seven courses—sounds intimidating, right? Not for me. I grew up with these types of meals, though in truth, they were always reserved for special occasions: Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving. By the end—as in post-liqueur—the family members

who weren't involved in some passionate conversation were nodding off. It may sound crazy to some, but hey, that's Italian culture for ya.

We start out with an antipasto plate. Despite the fact that Kate and I sit at a table alone, this initial platter, featuring fresh mortadella, capocollo, salami, cheese and marinated vegetables, is enough to feed a much bigger group. Having an idea of what's still to come, we indulge hesitantly, using up just a few slices of the crusty bread in the basket. "This plate alone is worth \$15," says Kate, referring to the measly per-person price of the brunch.

RESTAURANTS

By the time course number two—a mix of perfectly done calamari and baby shrimp in a rich sauce served over rice—arrives, I notice that the numbers in this gargantuan hall are increasing exponentially. I feel like I've crashed some big Italian wedding and proceed to peruse the sparkly room, looking for the little old man belting out faux opera between sips of wine (like my Pop used to).

UNLIKE ME, Kate isn't used to the constant stream of dishes, so we take a little breather after the hot appetizer. The pasta course is on deck. A member of our service team tells us to flag him down whenever we're ready and moments after we give the nod, he returns with a big bowl of meat tortellini in a simple tomato sauce. I give mine a good dose of grated parm and a few shots of pepper but after a small second helping even I am starting to lose the battle against my stomach.

We figure a wine break is in order. I walk outside the room to the hallway bar and buy a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon for a mere \$15. Sure it's only noon on Sunday and I have a soccer practice scheduled in two hours, but some deals simply

can't be passed up.

Kate claims to be "half-cut" after a couple of glasses but we're far from done with the food at this point. Three courses arrive all at once: roast beef and gravy, a fish dish (with accompanying potatoes and mixed vegetables) and a bowl of salad featuring greens, sliced tomatoes and shredded carrots tossed in a simple vinaigrette. The broiled sole fillets are tasty, especially with a splash of lemon. Kate has some fish too, but essentially packs it in at that point, passing on the roast beef. I fear the ramifications of sending the platter back untouched and therefore put back a couple of the thinly cut pieces. In true Italian fashion, I save the salad for last.

I HAD HOPED that they would show some Serie A calcio on the big screen nearby but I'm pleasantly surprised that the World Hockey Championships are on. (Too bad Smytka and the rest of Team Canada were tanking it to Austria.) It's hard to concentrate on hockey anyway, what with all the food. Finally, there's just one course remaining. Our guy tells us chocolate cake is the dessert this Sunday. Instinctively, I tell him that one slice will be fine to split and the kid makes me proud by suggesting that he'll ensure it's a "big one." Kate gives me grief for taking care of the entire icing layer on the top but really, who's she kidding? One tiny bite was enough for her.

We roll out of the Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre and I begin to think of potential excuses for why I'll be slower than usual on the soccer pitch. I'll just be honest. I had one of those trademark special occasion Italian meals. The family may not have been there.

But they were certainly with me in spirit. ☺

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DISH WEEKLY

Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiver. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, whereupon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drummie. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for

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Have your say. Tell us which food establishments serve your favorites in the categories to follow. Help the places you like win a coveted 6th Annual Vue Weekly Golden Fork Award. Read the results - and more - on May 20th. For your ballot to count, you must give answers in at least ten categories and include your name, address, and a daytime phone number.

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best dishes

- Appetizers _____
- Soups _____
- Salads _____
- Breads _____
- Steaks _____
- Venison _____
- Sushi _____
- Tapas _____
- Pub Food _____
- Dim Sum _____
- Sandwiches _____
- Hamburgers _____
- French Fries _____
- Wraps _____
- Pizza _____
- Desserts _____
- Chicken Wings _____
- Smoothies/Fruit Drink _____

best restaurants

- Breakfast _____
- Bakery _____
- Coffee/Tea Shop _____
- Deli _____
- Bavarian _____
- Greek _____
- French _____
- Italian/Pasta _____
- Chinese _____
- Thai _____
- Japanese _____
- East Indian/Tandoori _____
- Mexican/Latin American _____
- Steakhouse _____
- Seafood _____
- Vegetarian _____

other bests

- Sweets _____
- Snacks (pretzels, bagels) _____
- Pre-theatre dining _____
- Restaurant for lovers _____
- Innovative menu _____
- Wine list _____
- Beer list _____
- When you only have \$10 _____
- Best when someone else is paying _____
- Late night/all night _____
- Weekend brunch _____
- Best service _____
- Sports Bar _____
- Best Patio _____
- Best Chalm _____
- Best Hotel _____

This is your official ballot. **Send it in!**

Name: _____
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Mail answers to:

Vue Weekly's 6th Annual Golden Fork Awards
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Entries must be received no later than 5 pm, May 14 2004
 (No duplicate entries, 1 entry per person. Any entries with identical writing to another will be discarded.)



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DISH WEEKLY

me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself.

Average Price: \$\$ (Reviewed 03/04/04)

82 BBQ AND NOODLE HOUSE

9118-82 Ave • 448-9988

With the growing tickle in my throat letting me know sickness would overtake me soon, I decided I needed a big, spicy bowl of some type of Asian soup. Steve had heard there was a new noodle house down Whyte—and it seemed like the perfect remedy to the evil brewing inside me. The menu is packed with all sorts of standard Chinese fare and it's too bad we're just a pair popping in for a quick bite because the BBQ duck dinner for four (at what seems like a reasonable \$65.75) looks tasty. Instead, we split a few dishes: the empire chicken, a BBQ pork chow mein and, to curb my spicy soup craving, a medium-sized bowl of the seafood hot and sour concoction. The server brings me a huge pot of loose leaf jasmine tea, helping me soothe the irritation in my throat prior to the main event. The food arrives quickly, starting with the soup. This hot and sour version has your typical tofu and strands of thinly sliced Chinese mushrooms, along with peas, shredded carrots, calamari and baby shrimp in an ultra-thick, almost gelatinous broth. For the short while that the soup remained hot (temperature-wise), my throat feels much better. After getting through a bowl or two each, the empire chicken and the chow mein arrive. The former, served on a small, oval platter with breaded chicken chunks, mushrooms, green peppers, carrots, water chestnuts, baby corns and peanuts, is supposed to be spicy. (It had the little red chilis beside the name on the menu, for Crissakes.) It's good, yes, but provides little in the way of a kick. I have to be honest—I wasn't too impressed with the chow mein platter, either. The amount of BBQ pork amongst the bok choy and other veggies looks scant and upon further digging, we find our initial assessment to be correct. I did like the crunchy noodles, however, a nice contrast to the rest of the dish. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 01/08/04)

FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO

10354-82 Ave • 439-9604

You want brave? Try opening a restaurant a few weeks before Christmas, which is exactly what the owners of Flavours Modern Bistro have done on the famous Old Strathcona stretch. Sure,

you get the Christmas push, but January is downtime for most establishments. Then again, there's a reason rents on Whyte are so high: never-ending traffic. I walked into Flavours (kudos to them on the inclusion of the "u," by the way), the former location of the Bagel Tree, and was immediately impressed by the look of the swanky new spot, what with the cozy blue chairs, dark hardwood décor (both tables and floor) and the high ceiling complete with oddly-shaped alcoves on the walls. I have an intelligent, concise menu in front of me, offering a selection of salads, apps, "flavourwiches" and a few tasty-looking entrées (oh, and two varieties of eggs Benedict). I almost bite on the braised lamb shanks with a white bean and lentil ragout but I always get lamb, so I go instead for the chicken pancetta sandwich (sorry, flavourwich), featuring a grilled chicken breast, pancetta, smoked mozzarella with a roasted red pepper and garlic mayo on multi-grain bread. Basically, it's a high-end "club." In a fowl mood himself, Steve selects the five-pecan crusted chicken, a real earthy-looking dish that was served with a brown pomegranate mustard sauce. More people begin to file in and I decide that Flavours is a solid addition to Whyte's dining scene and not just because people are trudging along in minus-40 weather to get there. I can't think of many, if any, places on the strip that combine such an obvious level of sophistication with so little in the way of pretension and overly expensive items. The well-proportioned dishes top out at about \$16 or \$17 while the top price on the wine list is about \$40 or so, instead of a starting point. You could easily spend more for less. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 01/29/04)

IL PORTICO

10012-107 St • 424-0707

Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tantalizing apps like the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, com-fed, free-range chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dressing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, includ-

ing prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are showstoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish. **Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/26/04)

MILL CREEK CAFÉ

9562-82 Ave • 439-5535

Other than a bevy of nice-looking sweets and baked goods, sandwiches are pretty much the order of the day at Mill Creek Café. Kate orders the Montreal smoked meat sandwich, while I eventually get around to choosing the salmon salad. Then come the questions. "Swiss, cheddar or cream cheese?" the counter girl asks. Kate says Swiss, I say cream. "Tomato, cucumber and sprouts?" Yup. "Pickles?" Sure. "Hot, honey or Dijon mustard?" Kate says yes to the former and after a bit of deliberation, I pass, figuring there's no need to add mustard to the salmon. "Mayo and butter?" Neither. Mill Creek bakes everything fresh each day and as I attempt to wrap my mouth around the massive slices of grainy whole wheat bread with pieces of carrot in it, I think to myself that it looks awfully inviting. I had taken note of the fact that Kate asked for hot mustard and I patiently awaited her reaction. Sure enough, it came. "Whoa," she says after the first or second bite. It's actually really hot stuff—I try a nibble and some of the mustard actually burns a small nick on my lip. These sandwiches are huge and because baked goods are in our immediate future, we pack up the remainders and head back to the counter. This time, I'm only slightly more decisive—a piece of chocolate cherry loaf (a mere buck and change) and a slice of lemon meringue pie, though the chocolate peanut butter bars were crying out at me. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 12/04/03)



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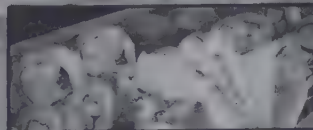
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DISH WEEKLY

OVERTIME SOUTH

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• 485-1717

I've been to the downtown Overtime in the past, but this version, once home to a Scruffy Murphy's, is definitely different. Sure, the numerous TVs and comfy little alcoves to relax in with friends are the same, and the Kevin Lowe paraphernalia is visible as a framed Team Canada jersey belonging to the Oil GM and part owner hangs at the bar. But other than the mini-humidor, the swank-o-meter hardly registers. No, this is a more proletariat crowd—couples, dudes in ballcaps and beer. Another thing that's different is the food. I recall a relatively in-depth, upscale bar-food menu at the downtown digs but Overtime South... Well, I'm pretty sure it's the old Scruffy's menu. There's your typical roadhouse fare of finger foods and sandwiches, with a Guinness pie and all-day Irish breakfast thrown in for good measure. I'm somewhat tempted by the latter, which has eggs, sausages, blood pudding, Irish soda bread and tomatoes, but I bail. The waitress lets us know that wings and mussels are on special and we end up trying some of each. We get a pound of medium wings, on for just \$3.50. "I like the sauce," Kate says of the plump wings. "It's buttery. And I like the mussels too." I agree. The wings actually have a good amount of meat on them, unlike many places that serve disgraceful, bony little things for their specials. Nothing at all wrong with the mussels either, as the white wine cream concoction has ample flavour and surprisingly, the focaccia is good. Nowhere near the same

neighbourhood as my mother's, but light and airy nonetheless. We split the two ample pieces of fish and divvy up the ultra-thin deep-fried potato slices that represent the "chips" half of the equation. I was a little unsure of things when I first walked into Overtime South. It wasn't what I initially envisioned and the menu seemed like a step down from the original location. But you know what? The place is similar to the Oil throughout this courageous stretch drive in March—better than expected. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 03/25/04)

SMOKEY JOE'S HICKORY SMOKEHOUSE

15135 Stony Plain Road • 413-3379

I figure—er, I mean, I reckon—Smokey Joe's was conceived as a replica of old-fashioned prairie cuisine, or at least an homage to it. License plates from all over the continent dot the walls and the menu, bound in wood, has headings like "Samwiches" and "Young Un's Dinners." The ranch theme is a little schmaltzy but for a guy soon to vacate the province, it's enough to bring a small tear to my eye. The coolest thing has to be the pink butcher paper they use for tablecloths—that's a nice touch. My comedic dining buddy Steve is along for this trail ride and he busts a gut when he spots the veggieburger on the menu. "I bet you it's never been ordered," he says. Well, neither of us are gonna be the first so instead, we put all our eggs in one high-cholesterol basket: the sampler for two. It includes, in no particular order, two roasted quarter chickens, pork ribs, turkey, ham, beef and two of Smokey Joe's famous ultra-hot wings. Oh, and garlic toast. "We're out of wings tonight

so I'll give you another quarter chicken. Is that okay?" our host asks. Deal! You get your choice of three sides with the sampler so Steve and I agree on cornbread, beans and potato salad. I don't notice much green anywhere in the restaurant so we see no sense in having any on our plate. Back a century ago, a cowboy wouldn't have been clamouring for a side salad, right? I swear there's a strained look on our server's face as she lugs out the plate with what Steve refers to as "a pile of meat" on it. "There, go wild," she says. All of the homemade barbecue sauces are lined up in front of us—Smokey Joe's sells them on the premises, along a variety of the meats, including jerky—and it's time to get to work. On this snowy, frigid night, the platter gives me a much-needed dose of summertime. The spicy taste of the smoked meats, the richness of the beans and the creamy potato salad make me forget that it got dark at 4:30 p.m. that day. **Average Price: \$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 12/11/03)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153

True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed

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DISH WEEKLY

alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

ZOCCA'S PIZZERIA

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After a trek to the city's northernmost point (my cell's signal was gone), I walk in Zocca's to find a few old boys putting away some afternoon pitchers. I grab a seat at a small table just a small leap away from the claw machine and the parquet dance floor, which I'm certain is hopping on Saturdays (\$1.99 highballs for Ladies' Night). The specials sign reveals that you can get a \$50 bar tab for your birthday ("ask server for details," it reads) and I get sad when I realize I probably couldn't even drink enough anymore to use the damn thing up. I can eat, however, and I bypass all the baked loaves, pastas and parmigianis on the menu and go straight to the pizzas. They come in either medium or large and aside from the build-your-own options, there are also has a few gourmet specialties: the Zorba (take a guess at the items on that one), the VIP (featuring a strange mix of salami and shrimp) and the Donair. I go for the medium Cajun chicken, which features red and green peppers, onions, mushrooms, a special Cajun spice and the diced chicken. Like one of the older gents sipping on his draft, I flip through the paper while I patiently wait. After a while, the barkeep/server pops by. "It's coming," she says. "These are thick pizzas." And she puts her two hands about three inches apart to give me an idea of what to expect. She's not kidding—the pie arrives on a stylish old serving tray and it looks more like a big quiche than your typical flat pizza, maybe even thicker than the server had claimed. The dough is moist on the interior but exceptionally crispy on the outside, just the way I like it. And the toppings are loaded on, from the chunky pieces of peppers to the hearty chunks of ultra-tender, spicy chicken. They put a layer of cheese over the top but not just a few loose strands of shredded mozzarella. This is a layer with uniform consistency, like getting the bottom of your car undercoated. It's a crust in itself and this pizza is one that most definitely requires utensils. The thought of sampling some three-for-one takeout crud after trying this gem just horrifies me. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/15/04)

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VUEWEEKLY

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B.C.'s Othello Tunnels are an underrated outdoor marvel

By STEWART DUNCAN

Albertans heading down B.C.'s Coquihalla Highway toward Vancouver this summer would do well to add an hour to their trip to see the Othello Tunnels just east of Hope.

Also known as the Quintette Tunnels, the series of five carved caverns were cut through the Coquihalla Canyon between 1911 and 1916 as the final leg of the Kettle Valley Railway. The tracks and ties are long gone, and wooden decks and railings span the bridges over the canyon's raging river. What's left is a level but unpaved walk or cycle path that allows anyone to appreciate Andrew McCulloch's engineering marvel.

McCulloch's task was to build a railway that would link the mines of southeastern B.C. with the Pacific coast. To do so, he had to maintain a very gentle grade that the heavy trains could handle, which meant cutting through mountains and spanning chasms rather than following the lay of the land. McCulloch

was lowered at several points down the sheer cliff face in a woven basket so he could visualize and map his route, dangling above a rushing current that almost certainly would have swept him to his death. Where the river wore a 300-foot-deep horse-shoe-shaped canyon through solid

TUNNELS

granite, McCulloch cut tunnels in perfect alignment. One can

now stand at the mouth of the first and look through the second into the third and fourth.

Although there are five tunnels, the third and fourth eventually meet up, so if you're counting, you'll think there's still one more somewhere. But to be properly aligned, the third tunnel could only be cut partway into the side of the cliff. Going west, the right side has no rock wall, relying instead on concrete supports. As the tunnel burrows deeper into the mountain, it

SEE PAGE 25

Going west, entering the first of the five Othello Tunnels. A flashlight is recommended to avoid dripping water and wet areas, but lights are not necessary.

Moor than meets the eye

The view from Tunnel 1, through 2 and into 3 shows the alignment of the Othello Tunnels, just east of Hope.

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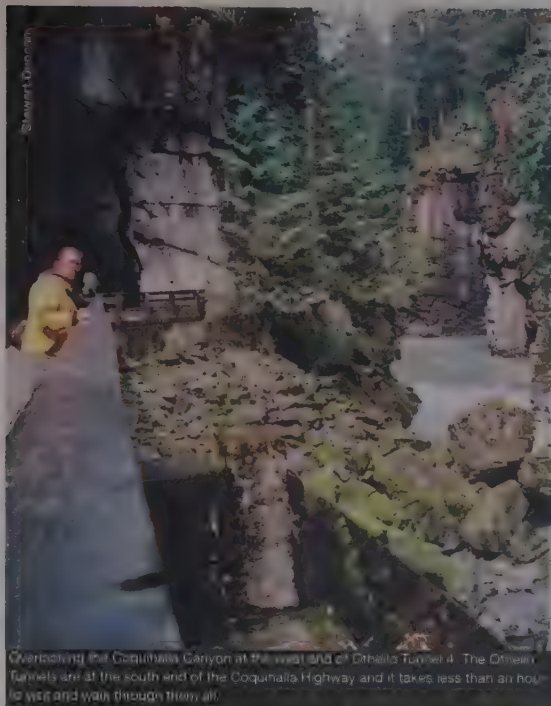


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Overlooking the Coquihalla Canyon at the west end of Othello Tunnel 4. The Othello Tunnels are at the south end of the Coquihalla Highway and it takes less than an hour to see and walk through them all.

Othello tunnels

Continued from page 22

becomes tunnel 4 with no daylight entering the side. The long fifth tunnel bends in the middle as the train headed away from the river and into the town of Hope.

The Othello moniker stems from McCulloch's love of Shakespeare. He used to read the Bard to his crew at night around the campfire and used the names of some of his most famous characters—Romeo, Juliet, Iago, Portia and Jessica—as points of reference along the Coq and touches of civilization in a harsh and primitive environment.

The Othello Tunnels are just a small part of the Kettle Valley Railway line and fortunately, they're just a few minutes from the highway or from Hope. Motorists traveling Highway 3 across southern B.C. or this brief stretch of the lower Coq have the option of stopping here and there for brief walks and bike rides along the Kettle Valley route before continuing their trip. But the more adventurous have a compelling option—one that also consists of several smaller options.

REGISTRATIONS are being accepted now for a cycle ride along any or all three portions of a 650-kilometre ride in September from Castlegar to Hope. The 13-day trip is conveniently broken into three segments that can be taken separately, or as a whole; it's arranged by Great Explorations tour group and Trails B.C. and is open to all.

The first stage is a six-day ride from Castlegar, a historic mining

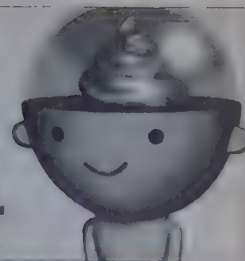
town on the banks of the Columbia River in southeastern B.C., to Beaverdell, a tiny stop on Highway 33 southeast of Kelowna. This part of the Kettle Valley Trail Cycle Tour covers part of what used to be the Columbia and Western Railway. The second stage is also six days long, continuing from Beaverdell to Coalmont, west of Princeton. This section includes Myra Canyon, which was deemed a national historic site in January 2003, for its 18 train trestles and two tunnels. Most of the trestles were destroyed by fires in September 2003, but a bypass route above the original rail line is being cut this spring. The tour-guided ride will still access outstanding viewpoints. From Myra Canyon, participants wind through orchards and vineyards, then west into more mining country.

It only takes four days for the third stage from Coalmont to Hope and covers the spectacular Coquihalla Canyon. Those who have driven the Coquihalla Highway from Kamloops on the way to Vancouver know what a scenic route this is, but the bike ride along a trail through the rain forest offers much more, including fast-flowing rivers, rapids and waterfalls. The highlight for many will come just before Hope as riders follow the Coquihalla Canyon through the five Othello tunnels.

Each segment of the trip includes museums and other points of interest, live musical performances and opportunities to meet area residents. Great Explorations, a B.C. tour operator (greatexplorations.com), is donating a portion of the proceeds to Trails B.C. to help fund work on the Trans-Canada Trail. See www.trailsbc.ca for more information. ●

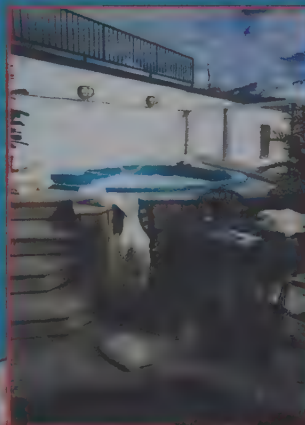
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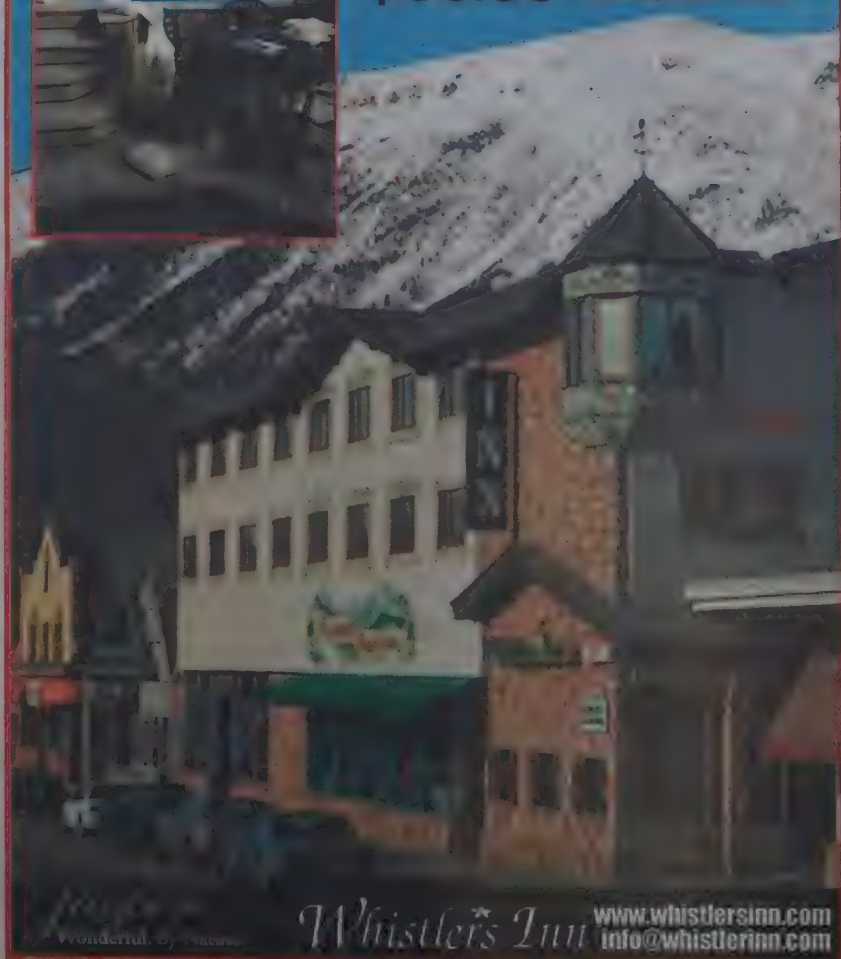
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Everything's ducky

An inflatable kayak is a versatile way to explore Alberta's natural wonders

BY COLIN CATHREA

The time will soon be ripe for our first excursion of 2004 down one of Alberta's great whitewater rivers. The trip will be in our old dependable inflatable kayaks, and I can hardly wait.

Inflatable kayaks, affectionately known as "duckies," are a fun, versatile and inexpensive way to play in the water. They boast many positive attributes, including their small uninflated size, light weight, great stability and copious interior storage space. Our past trips have been great, and the upcoming spring, summer and fall are sure to be no exception. But let me recap 2003.

Our first trip was to the Upper Red Deer River in early June. What a bust! The river was so high and full of debris that no one in our group wanted to risk it. The logjams were huge, and that's the kind of stuff that can kill. We undertook a smaller excursion on the Panther River that connects with the Red Deer at the forestry trunk road. We put in about eight kilometres upstream at Sheep Creek and blew down in an hour. Do the math. The camping in this area is phenomenal, as you can tent free of charge right beside the river in some pretty remote spots. The Upper Red Deer is a somewhat undiscovered area that

has Class I to IV sections. You can put in for a short blast through the "Double Ledge" from Cache Hill to Williams Creek, and the play-holes at the S-Turns are sometimes ripe for surfing, but mostly this is a cruising river with challenging runs as long as two days. Call the Alberta Environment River Report, and if she's over 200 centimetres, stay away. We saw a canoe club leaving

of the best whitewater runs from Class I to the sometimes deadly VI. There are too many routes to go through here, so pick up a whitewater guide, or call one of the guiding/rental companies in Jasper for instruction and/or equipment.

SO WHAT'S IN STORE for 2004? Well, the Blackstone River south of Hinton has some good day trips, as do the McCloud and Brazeau. Fishing these rivers is fun and relatively easy. There are lots of secluded undeveloped camping spots as well as the occasional developed site. The Blackstone has nice Class II and III runs, and you'll cover a lot of territory before you realize it. Next will be the mighty North Saskatchewan from above the David Thompson turnoff to Two O'Clock Creek. Your put-in is in what I like to call the "heart of the Rockies." This is a full day trip accessible by paved highway with breathtaking views and steady Class II runs that are excellent for beginning and intermediate paddlers. Camping at Two O'Clock Creek is very nice, but if it's full you can find alternate spots along the highway (if you know what I mean). There is a great hike/bike ride up to

PADDLING

with a trailer of smashed boats last Saturday afternoon.

My favorite trip of last season was in Jasper on the Upper Athabasca. Drive from the town down the Parkway for 10.5 kilometres and look for a gravel pull-off on your right for your put-in. This is a beautiful three-hour trip with scenery that's second to none. You can keep going past Jasper if you feel like it, and cruise down another couple hours to where the river crosses under Highway 16. Take a camera and snacks. Hitchhiking back to Jasper is quite easy if you're standing with a paddle, life-jacket and wetsuit. Getting south of Jasper is a little more difficult, but it usually doesn't take too long.

Jasper National Park offers some

SEE PAGE 29

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GREAT OUTDOORS



Kayaking

Continued from page 26

Siffleur Falls that is well worth the trip. There are also some very interesting Indian burial grounds, sweat lodges and ceremonial artifacts in this area, which is considered sacred ground by several tribes. If you do come across any of these artifacts in

your travels through this unique area, please be respectful and don't disturb them.

If you're just starting out, the Mistaya Paddling Club, the Northwest Voyageurs Canoe and Kayak Club and the U of A Paddling Club offer cheap rentals, beginner to expert instruction and well-planned excursions almost every weekend. So get out there and make a splash. ●

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The canyon of reconstruction

Outdoor lovers reunite to restore fire-ravaged Myra Canyon

By STEWART DUNCAN

One of the best tourist trails in B.C. was destroyed last summer when forest fires swept through the southern interior of the province. But enthusiastic volunteers, governments and private corporations moved quickly to ensure the historic route of the Kettle Valley Railway between Kelowna and Penticton is open for cyclists and hikers this summer.

Myra Canyon's 90-year-old railway trestles were designated a national historic site in January 2003. But by September, 12 of the 18 were reduced to smoke, ash and cinders. The only two steel trestles

on the route remained intact, though the wood decks and railings were destroyed. In spite of the destruction, this exceptional 10-kilometre stretch of tunnels and trestles remains one of the most exciting sections of what is now the Trans-Canada Trail.

RESTORATION

The railway originally chugged and whistled from Midway, the halfway point between the Rocky Mountains and the port of New Westminster, to Hope, where it joined the CP line for the final leg to Vancouver. Myra Canyon's trestles and tunnels, built between 1912 and 1914, were an incredible feat of engi-

neering and hard labour, all done to maintain an easy, consistent grade for heavy trains. At the time, it was money well spent to haul lead, mineral ore and passengers, but it proved to be a short-lived accomplishment. Automobiles, trucking and aviation were the wave of the 20th century quickly made the 18th-century technology of the railway nearly obsolete.

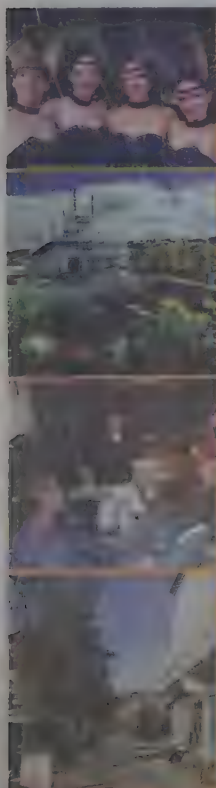
SO FOR ALL the planning, work and expense to build the KVR, it only

had a useful lifespan of 50 years. The mines played out and passenger service ended in 1964 as people opted for the newfound freedom of private motorcars on paved highways. Freight continued on the KVR until 1973, when the trains flashed their last caboose.

But the route's maximum 2.5 per cent grade made it ideal for cyclists to pedal and coast from one spectacular view of mountains, valleys, waterfalls and rivers to another exciting scene around every sweep-

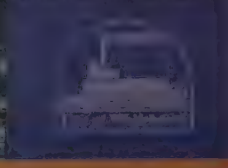
ing curve. It's no wonder that enthusiasts have been eager to restore the entire route as soon as possible. Last October, the B.C. government announced it would help community groups and the private sector get things back on track. Assistance has also been promised from Ottawa and CP Rail is providing technical expertise.

A few weeks ago, I took a hike from the high side of the canyon to the first of the burned out trestles—good ol' No. 18—and while the



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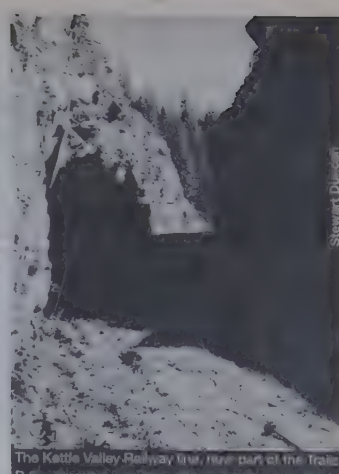
A small stream makes its way down a desolated slope in Myra Canyon, a potential heritage site that was ravaged by fires last summer.



What used to be Trestle 18 in Myra Canyon is now just a heap of charred timbers, still discretely covered in snow in mid-April.



A typical route has been cut into the cliff around the gap, providing access to the next two trestles.



The Kettle Valley Railway line, now part of the Trail B.C. Railway, for cycling, hiking and general riding, often went through rather than over obstacles in dense forest. The trail is now a 100 per cent. It makes it an easy stroll or ride.

destruction was thorough, dedicated volunteers had already cut away some cliff face to bypass the abyss. Melting snow, water and mud confirmed that it was still too early for an extensive tour, but the first bypass provides access to the unburned 16 and 17. From there, it's a short walk/ride to the next of six piles of charred remains, deceptively covered with the pure whites of winter, before encountering the first steel trestle.

PLANS TO RESTORE the route aren't finalized, but members of the Myra Canyon Restoration Society would prefer not to cut more bypasses as was done at trestle 18. The canyon wall above that trestle wasn't high, so it was a reasonable option that provided prompt access to other sites, but society members are more interested in restoration than renovating. New trestles will have to be built, and while it would make sense to build them out of steel at a factory and have them delivered by chopper,

the preference is to build them out of wood.

There's a few reasons for this. One is historic value, although this is offset somewhat by real concerns of future fires, which are already threatening the province's southern Interior this spring for the second year in a row. Another reason is the abundance of timber in the area, some of it scorched and some of it dying from mountain pine beetles. Either way, it's usable timber that has to be harvested for economic reasons and

forest health. And that's the third reason: it's a lot cheaper to rebuild the trestles out of wood treated with fire-retardant. They don't have to be anywhere near as strong as the originals, though they would accommodate emergency vehicles. Some have suggested building suspension bridges where appropriate and the task force isn't ruling that idea out, although they'd detract from the air of historical authenticity prized by so many people involved in the project.

AS OF MID-APRIL, the task force was going ahead with a plan for a pathway above the original route that will be relatively simple to construct. When lighter versions of the trestles are rebuilt, cyclists will have the option of a loop for an easy afternoon ride.

My starting point was a mere 18 kilometres from Kelowna, off McCulloch Road. From there, the route takes you past lakes and lodges, fol-

SEE PAGE 33

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Auditing the course

Playing the year's first round of golf is like attending your first day of university

By DAVID DICENZO

In an instant, I make the snap decision to get my golf season underway. A wave of joy hits me because, as any committed Canadian hacker will attest, the six-to-seven-month hiatus from the game in the Great White North is enough to drive you beyond insane. In some ways, it's a lot like the first day of school—the anticipation of a new beginning is overwhelming, but at

the same time you're fully aware of the eventual misery you'll most likely encounter at some point along the way.

Like all back-to-schoolers, I have to buy a range of stuff. For this semester, I've invested in a brand spanking new set of irons, a purchase comparable to buying your all-

GOLF

important books. But I've also picked up a few accessories, like protective iron covers, a metal scrub brush to keep my grooves clean and a six-pack of little Whiffle Balls so I can take full swings in my living room. (The screen door on the patio is in for a beating.) I'm in full geek

mode. Continuing that train of thought, I dress up for my first day. I don a pair of grey khakis, a wind-breaker and my PGA Tour socks, a well-intended, albeit hokey gift that I once received. I strap my Taylor Made golf bag over my shoulder like a knapsack and I'm out the door.

Just the thought of getting out for the first time since last September is exhilarating. Maybe too much so. As I drive toward Riverside, I feel the need to calm myself down, something I hope to do throughout the golf season. A buddy of mine once interviewed NHL star Brett Hull, who happens to be a fantastic golfer. (I've seen him play.) The future Hall-of-Famer suggested that hockey players typically aren't prepared to succeed on the golf course

because theirs is a game of intense emotion and balls-out passion. It's a mindset that just doesn't translate well to the course, where deliberation and ultra-precise execution are required. The Golden Brett's words are stuck in my head and the short ride to Riverside essentially becomes a deep breathing exercise to prepare me for the day's golfing.

The course is still entirely on temporary greens but it costs just \$16 to play as much as you want. It's virtually empty out there and I look at the whole experience as if it were course outline day at a university class. My objective this afternoon is to get an idea of what I need to accomplish to be successful throughout the term. I refuse to take a scorecard with me, the first time in my life that I've done that. My score doesn't matter. Every hole is shortened so you can't worry about distances, and on temp greens you never mark yourself down for more than two putts anyway. What I want to do is work on my routine and strike the ball as well as possible.

Those are my lone goals for the day.

MY FIRST SHOT with my new irons is promising. After teeing off with my old trusty one-iron—golf lore says that even God has trouble hitting a one-iron, which must make me Davey the Almighty, 'cause I love the thing—I nuke a pitching wedge about 20 yards beyond the little patch of mowed fairway that makes the green. Again, who cares about getting the distance correct? I was

happy to hit the new iron crisp. I do the same with my eight-iron approach on the next hole and by the third, I've already caught up to a few groups who let me tear through.

Now in the clear, I have the option to hit more than one ball on a hole. I sample the driver every now and then but my real focus is on honing a pre-shot routine, which every good golfer does. Each one is different. My swing thoughts and subsequent actions go something like this: straight spine, chin up (so your shoulders can move unobstructed through takeaway and follow-through), a strong but not overly tight grip, knees flexed, weight on the inside of the feet, a waggle (like my fellow lefty Mikey Weir—it really does help you feel the proper swing path), then, finally, pull the trigger, with my weight transferring through to my right side. I admit that I don't do this on every single shot and I especially notice my mental deficiencies when I endure a mid-round slump. But it dawns on me that this is exactly when I need to rely on the routine the most. I get back to thinking patiently (again, deep breaths help) and, sure enough, I smoke a few irons down the stretch, including some well-judged shots on the 18th hole.

It was an educational first day in the expansive outdoor classroom. I really need to study some more, however, if I ever intend to unveil my "A" game. And I better get on that.

With the maddening brevity of the Canadian golf season, final exams are only a few months away. ☺



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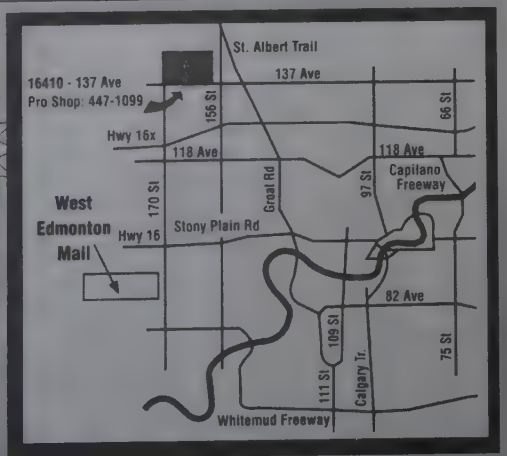
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One of several panoramas from the KVR trail in Myra Canyon overlooking part of Kootenai and showing burned and unburned areas.

Myra Canyon

Continued from page 31

lowing sections of Pooley Creek as it meanders and splashes from the upper canyon, eventually joining KLO Creek. Riders overlook orchards, vineyards and gentle urban sprawl until the trail unravels its way into tourist-heavy Penticton, affectionate-

ly squeezed between the south end of Okanagan Lake and the north end of Skaha Lake.

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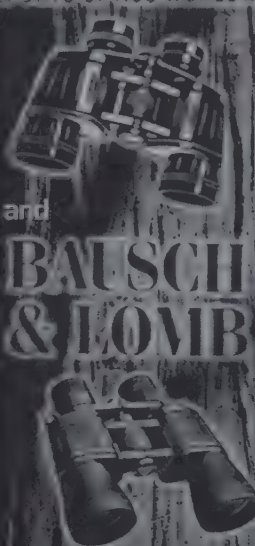
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Wood alcohol

Singing the praises of getting hammered in the great outdoors

By MARK RABIN

The answers always come when you're drinking in the great outdoors. Nothing is finer than having a few (or 10) alcoholic beverages out in the open air on a warm (or cold) summer's evening, the moon and the stars illuminating you with their platinum radiance as you fumble in the black and blue darkness for the zipper to your tent. A night spent drinking in the woods conjures up memories of blurry conversations splashed with memories of fire, bocce ball, river-crossings gone awry, making out, trying to make out, the occasional caber toss and countless other silly adventures. Having a few casual drinks in the outdoors is not only limited to middle-aged adults running in 24-hour relay fundraising events; it straddles many generations and takes on multifarious forms.

The woods are a place of mystery and wonder. Starting at an early age, children are attracted to the

freedom of the forest. While growing up in the Maritimes, my friends and I spent a large part of our free time running around in the woods, building forts, exploring, falling in the river, experimenting with fire and basically evading authority of any kind. But at some point, usually in the mid-teens, our perception of the woods changes and we enter the formative drinking-in-the-woods stage, thereby laying the foundations for, well, more of the same in

RECREATION

our adult years.

When teenagers drink in the woods, the focus is on the actual consumption of alcohol, whereas adult in-the-woods drinking is (usually) recreational. Whether they're drinking in the woods behind their subdivisions, parents' cabins, city parks or even golf courses, teenagers' main goals are to get loaded and not get caught, the extra element of danger making early drinking experiences that much more exciting.

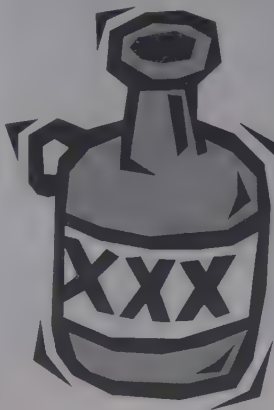
MY FRIEND DAVE MACLEAN, who grew up in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, tells me that he and his buddies would venture out into the woods

and build little forts and cabins for the sole purpose of having a spot to drink. Apparently, most groups of friends had their own camp, each one expected to host a drinking party at some point during the season. He mentioned that in their young and foolish state, they wouldn't even concern themselves with the basic necessities for survival in the forest—no water, just booze. As crazy as it sounds, they even went so far as to boil Mr. Noodles in beer for breakfast. A horrifying thought now, but to a 16-year-old male, it must have made perfect sense.

I grew up in New Brunswick, where our favourite woods-drinking locations were places like "The Hydro" and "The Red River," to name a couple. You could only get to the Hydro (named after the nearby power lines) by crossing a shifty log bridge over the river. I remember looking over at one of the "popular" girls during one of my first visits to the Hydro; she was in the process of chugging an entire pint of vodka, straight. Minutes later, she just fell to the forest floor like a brick in water. I remember thinking, "Man oh man, now *that's* drinking in the woods!"

But when you drink in the woods, there's always one person who falls in

the fire, or an idiot who throws a tire into the flames. There's sometimes even some kids on acid for the first time, blankly staring up at the trees and holding their Swiss Army knives



at full attention. And the fighting—what better time to fight than while you're drunk in the woods?

MOST OUTDOOR DRINKING in the adult world takes place in vehicle-accessible campsites. Whether it's

May long weekend, a fishing or hunting trip or a plain old maxing and relaxing holiday, the great outdoors supply the perfect backdrop for summer fun and boozing. How often do the boys catch something on their annual "hunting trip"? Maybe not as often as they used to. But they sure have a good time, thanks to our good friend alcohol. The daylight hours are spent hiking, biking, swimming, fishing, climbing, kayaking, canoeing, bocce-balling, Frisbee-tossing, reading and relaxing. When the sun drops at the end of the day, a fire is built, the booze starts flowing as dinner is getting prepared and the true festive nature of being in the outdoors really emerges. As the campfire crackles, music is played, stories are told and experiences are shared. If a little more privacy is required, you can always retreat into the brisk, enveloping darkness, the relative warmth of your tent or car... or wherever you've passed out.

Obviously, discretion and conscientiousness about safety have to be exercised when you're boozing it up in the woods, but I shouldn't have to remind anybody of that. My advice to you is to get out to your nearest grove of trees and start drinking. ☉

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education 2004

Community knowledge

CSL program sends U of A students out of the library and into the community

By KRISTINE OWRAM

Too much time spent in the library all too often translates into even less of a chance for students to find practical applications for their knowledge until after they've graduated. This all may be changing, however, as a new course component recently introduced at the University of Alberta is giving arts students a chance to throw away their books for a semester and apply the theories they're learning to life out there in

the real world.

The component, known as community service learning (or CSL), was brought to the U of A last year by assistant sociology professor Sara Dorow. During her time teaching at the University of Minnesota, Dorow had seen firsthand what CSL could do for an institution, its students and its community and wanted to bring the benefits of the program to the U of A.

CSL had a trial run last year as a part of three U of A sociology courses: Inequality and Social Stratification, Media and Cultural Globalization and Cultural Studies. In all three classes, students were given the option to participate in the program as part of their coursework. If they chose to do so, they were sent out into the community to perform approximately 20 hours of

volunteer work with organizations as diverse as Global Visions, the House of Mother Earth Project (who are trying to create a model sustainable urban community in Edmonton), a senior housing facility and an after-school tutoring program.

"If CSL is done well," Dorow explains, "students will have to move back and forth, not just physi-

PROGRAMS

cally but intellectually, between the classroom and the community experience. They're having to reflect on it all the time, so the kinds of skills that come out the other end are everything from employability to citizenship skills to a better understanding of diversity issues in the community."

Besides offering students essential skills for the real world, Dorow added that CSL provides a vital service to the university as well. "The university is often seen as quite separate from the community," she says, "and CSL is a way to bridge that gap and say, 'Look, the university is not just some ivory tower; it's a place that is engaging in what's going on around it.'"

FORMER GLOBAL VISIONS festival director Helen Folkmann agrees that the U of A is not as involved in the community as it could be, but that CSL is a step in the right direction. "I really like the fact that the university is beginning this kind of work," she says, "because it's really important for the university to be in touch with the community. I've talked to some of the other community par-

ticipants from last year, and they all had the same experience we did: very good volunteers who were very committed, and that's really good for the community as a whole; it makes us all richer."

Once the participating students had completed their volunteer hours, they were asked to report on their experiences in a variety of ways, including journal entries, short papers and presentations to their peers. The pilot project was such a success that CSL is being incorporated into courses in three new departments next academic year, including women's studies, linguistics and political science.

Steve Patten will be teaching the first political science course to involve community service learning in the fall. Called Citizenship for Democracy, the course was created

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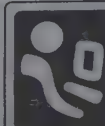
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by last year's Students' Union based on a suggestion given by Ralph Nader when he spoke on campus in the fall of 2002. "When we were beginning to plan this course," Patten says, "one of our goals was to have the students do something in the community, do something that's political, do something that's activist. So when I heard Sara Dorow was starting up community service learning here at the U of A, I thought it would be a great match with this particular course. It helps the students by creating pre-organized institutionalized situations where all they have to do is sign up and participate."

While the course is still in the planning stages, Patten hopes to include a wide variety of options for his students, naming everything from a labour union to a native friendship centre as possible community organizations where students

lenges they face."

MIKE HUDEMA, SU president for the 2002/03 academic year and an important player in the development of Patten's course, is excited about CSL. "Regardless of whether we take an active role or not," he says, "the world is being created. We are all citizens of the planet, and we do have some sort of responsibility in shaping our future. This will give students a look at all the different tools they have to really start shaping whatever future they want, regardless of what side of the political spectrum they're on."

Besides giving students an opportunity to shape their futures, teaching them employable skills and informing them about the challenges faced by community organizations, Patten, Hudema, Dorow and Folkmann all agree that CSL is an indication that the Uni-

"While it would be a mistake to ever pull students out of the library permanently, it's useful to pull them out of the library for a little while and put them into real-life situations. I'm hoping they'll get a real understanding of what it's like to be trying to make something happen in a community organization, because sometimes it's hard to wrap your mind around the challenges they face."

will be given the opportunity to volunteer. He hopes to have students present their experiences through displays on campus and discussions with him and their classmates.

Ultimately, Patten hopes the practicality of the CSL experience will be of the biggest benefit to students. "While it would be a mistake to ever pull students out of the library permanently," he says, "it's useful to pull them out of the library for a little while and put them into real-life situations. I'm hoping they'll get a real understanding of what it's like to be trying to make something happen in a community organization, because sometimes it's hard to wrap your mind around the chal-

versity of Alberta is heading in the right direction when it comes to community involvement. "I'd really like to see the university be responsive to the community's needs and the needs of the public," Hudema says, "because the university is supposed to be a public institution, in my opinion, that fulfills its role in researching or teaching about the public good and using public concepts to try and make our society better. I think the only way you can do that is by involving yourself and really diving into the community, finding out what the issues are and then evolving programs or courses that can respond effectively to those." ☉

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Angel of languages

Speed-teacher Michel Thomas can help you learn a foreign language in three days

By GRANVILLE GREEN

"Learning Spanish with Michel," Oscar-winning actress Emma Thompson has said, "was the most extraordinary learning experience of my life."

She's not alone. Celebrities such as Mel Gibson, Grace Kelly, Woody Allen, Barbra Streisand and Bob Dylan, as well as assorted diplomats, dignitaries and corporate executives, have spent time in 87-year-old Michel Thomas's New York City classrooms. Still, it was hard not to roll my eyes when I first heard claims that he could teach a practical and functional use of a second language in just three days. But given the recent experience of enduring an introductory course at the local community college—with all the inherent pop quizzes, memorization of phrases and vocabulary, and the boredom of a classroom full of much younger strangers—I was willing to suspend

disbelief and give it a try.

I imagined Thomas's institute would be loaded with quirky gadgets for high-speed language instruction and that he would be some sort of hypnotist character in a black cape. Instead, I was greeted by the reserved octogenarian and ushered into one of his classrooms, a stark, well-lit living room sparsely decorated with a pair of comfy armchairs. We sat down and got right to work.

THOMAS'S METHODS are the exact opposite of every kind of instruction most of us receive. He does not use

TEACHING

books. There are no drills or notes or homework. Most importantly, he demands that you not even think of trying to memorize a single word. Instead, he began by teaching me a few basic words and then asked me to form increasingly more complex sentences around them. By helping me to build blocks of grammar in my mind rather than on a chalkboard, Thomas enabled me to learn the roots of the language very quickly, after which it was a matter of picking up the necessary vocabulary to fill in the blanks. It was a very

refreshing way to learn.

Thomas himself prefers to remain close-lipped about his methods, letting his successes and the testimonials of past students speak for themselves. He also admits to a deep-seated mistrust of the traditional educational system. "There is no such thing as a bad student," Thomas says, "only bad teachers. The educational system is based on repetition, but learning is not what you memorize—it has to become knowledge, because what you know you never forget. You may block it out, but you don't forget it."

To prove his point, Thomas asks me to translate the sentence "Will you call me later, and will you tell me at what time it is going to be ready because I need it and I must have it today, if it is possible?" into Spanish. As I slowly translate the sentence, I find the words popping into my head one after the other, until I finally complete it. However, when Thomas asks me to translate the same phrase into French, a language I studied for several years in school, it is a struggle to get the words out, and when they finally do, they come out wrong. "It's the way you were taught," he says with a shrug.

THOMAS DIDN'T come upon his distinctive philosophy of teaching easily, and part of the reason he holds the extreme view that educational institutions are prisons derives from his having been a prisoner himself—he survived concentration and slave-labour camps in World War II, and is acutely sensitive to notions of an authority having control over individuals. Christopher Robbins recounts Thomas's extraordinary life in the well-received biography *Test of Courage*, which describes his wartime experiences in occupied France, where he was known for outfoxing Nazis as a member of the French Resistance.

He made the U.S. his home after the war, opened his first language institute in Beverly Hills in 1947, and eventually made a name for himself teaching languages to celebrities such as Alfred Hitchcock and Natalie Wood. Over the years, skeptics of his methods have been kept at bay by such successes as his teaching a classroom of underprivileged teenagers in L.A. how to speak French in only a few days in 1965, an experiment he repeated in a vocational school in London in 1997.

As Thomas charges as much as \$25,000 for three to five days of private instruction, his services have long been available almost exclusively to the rich and famous. Luckily for the rest of us, however, Thomas recently released CD courses in French, Spanish, Italian and German. "Everyone should know at least one other language than their own," he says, "because the globe is shrinking." ●

This article originally appeared in American Way.

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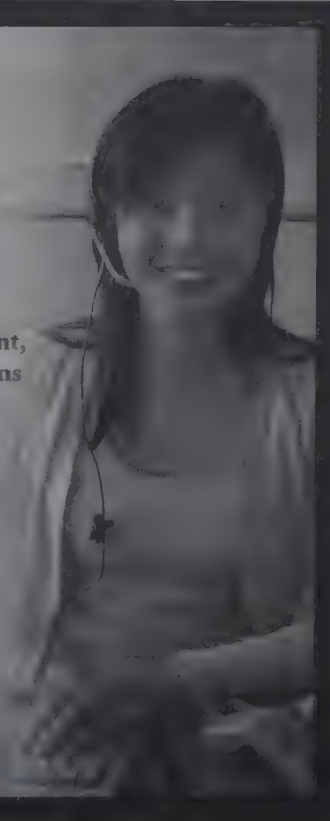
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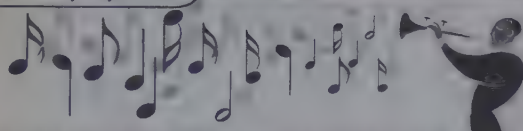
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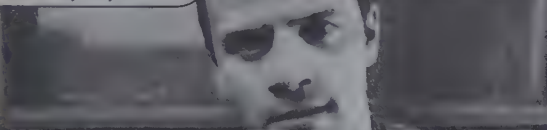
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MUSIC



Put on some sweaters

The Constantines' success is part inspiration, part perspiration

By JERED STUFFCO

In some ways, experiencing the Constantines live is like signing up for a hot yoga class: once inside, you'll laugh, you'll cry, you might even moan—but most of all, you'll sweat like a pig.

"The sweatiest band in Canada?" laughs Constantines guitarist/singer Steve Lambke over the phone from Saskatoon. "We don't have any gland problems or anything—don't give people the wrong idea. We sweat a healthy amount, I think."

Certainly, glands have little to do with it; the sweat arises from the sheer intensity that builds the second the band hits the stage. Part hedonism, part catharsis and part *esprit de corps*, there's little doubt this band knows how to deliver a loud, fun rock 'n' roll show. But the Constantines' performances are also intensely intimate affairs that often border on the chaotic. One famed performance at SXSW in Austin, Texas saw frontman Bry Webb ditching his guitar and literally bouncing off the walls.

"That was just one of those shows where everything breaks down," Lambke recalls. "Bry's guitar and amp both crapped out, so he was just total frontman that night—like

PREVIEW **ROCK**

Scream and scream again

Alexisonfire's George Pettit shrieks his way to success

By JAMES ELFORD

No drinking, no smoking, no caffeine and eight hours of sleep a night. That sounds like the regimen of an athlete in training, but in fact it's the rules George Pettit, lead screamer for Canadian screamo band Alexisonfire, has to follow to ensure he doesn't lose what's left of his vocal cords.

"We try and take a few days off every four days, but that's not hap-

pening on this tour—which sucks," says Pettit, who plans to do at least 20 minutes of vocal warm-ups and drink lots of warm liquids to keep his larynx limber. "When we're doing eight or nine shows in a row, it's gonna be a battle, like me fighting my body, to

PREVIEW **ROCK**

keep going. I'm gonna really have to take care of myself. It's a choice between partying every night and having a good time, or playing every night and having a good time, and it's not a choice at all because I like playing the shows more than I like getting drunk and all that."

Iggy Pop. Crazy things happen, but it's just part of the show. But the way we approach it, we're like, 'Whatever happens is cool' rather than stressed out about that kind of thing."

Instead of relying on haircuts, flashy clothing and slick marketing to sell the band, the Constantines have become rock 'n' roll heroes simply by writing great songs, making fantastic records and touring like demons. In other words, putting in a lot of hard work. "We were just in the U.K. and in [the *Guardian*] they described us as triers—like people who try," recalls Lambke with an incredulous chuckle. "The overall tone of the review was very positive, but to be described as triers? I dunno. The British music press is pretty ridiculous."

THE BAND'S CURRENT TOUR, dubbed The Threegut Records Fourth Anniversary Tour, sees the quintet hitting the road with labelmate and friend Jim Guthrie. In many ways, the tour reflects the bonds that were so integral to the band's early days in their hometown of Guelph, Ontario. Even though the group relocated to Toronto a couple of years ago, the Cons brought the party with them; Lambke currently shares a house with Guthrie and Threegut label boss Lisa Moran. "This tour is great—just to hear Jim's music every night is such a great thing," Lambke enthuses. "You just get excited by the good music that your friends are making and you feel inspired to make good music too."

Even though it's been nearly a year since the release of their fabulous disc *Shine a Light* and the band now has nearly 300 gigs under their belt, Lambke says the spontaneous nature of the Constantines' live experience is one he never tires of. "Sometimes it can get terrible, though," he admits. "We don't rehearse the transitions between songs and we don't rehearse what we're going to say to people, so sometimes it's kind of rambling and pointless and awkward, but that's kind of who we are as people—we're kind of awkward people. We just try and make the show as good and as fun as we can while still leaving it open to be a little different every night." ●

THE CONSTANTINES

With Jim Guthrie, the Wolfnote and No Hands: Sidetrack Café (Fri, April 30) • With Jim Guthrie: Seedys (Sat, May 1)

SEE PAGE 49

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MUSIC



music notes

By PHIL DUPERRON
 AND JERED STUFFCO

The beat of a different Runner

Rum Runner • With Knucklehead and the Homewreckers: New City (Fri, Apr 30) • With Knucklehead, the Dirtbags and the Ejaculators: The Sharktank: Sat, May 1 (all ages) For Calgary's Rum Runner, the release of their debut full-length *Association* has been a long time coming, a victory over the trials and tribulations that

plague all self-respecting punk bands.

The four-piece formed late in 2001, but a constant stream of dead-beat rhythm guitarists has held them back. "We've always had guitarists who've come and gone," says singer/guitarist Al Drinkle. "Some of them have been bigger pains in the ass than others and it's never worked out. Like, last summer, we planned a tour, then lost the guitarist so we couldn't do it anymore. So we recorded the album with the money we had instead as a three-piece."

They've solved their lineup troubles once and for all by moving drummer Mike Longfield to the frontlines, where he joins bassist Kurt Jensen and new drummer Carey Maillot. The band's first recording, a seven-inch split with the now-defunct Blotto Boys, was a Pogues tribute album, thereby clearing up any mystery surrounding their initial influences. "It seems like a really weird idea in retrospect," Drinkle says. "We just love the Pogues—prob-

bly a little too much—and just thought it would be more fun to record their songs than our own."

The Pogues imprint is still evident on *Association*, but Rum Runner has also branched out, taking on some slide guitar and other bluesy sounds stemming from Drinkle's fascination with artists like Blind Willie Johnson and Bo Diddley. In fact, with the lineup change and the fact that nearly a year has elapsed since they recorded it, Drinkle says the songs already sound old to him. Many have been reworked since the disc came out on New York's Longshot Music earlier this month. "It's kinda weird," Drinkle says. "I like the songs a lot, I think it's a decent album, but I'm really excited to come out with a new one, 'cause I think it'll be even better. I think the influences go further, in even weirder directions. I'm hoping to use more slide guitar and different instruments for the next one. I think there's still punk rock in all the new

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songs, but it's more of a development of styles that have been done before, but kinda unfamiliar in the punk genre." (PD)

The best years of our Knives

End This Week With Knives • With Drive By Punch and Run With the Hunted • Orange Hall • Sat, May 1 I swear to God, if I hear one more band copping Fugazi's moody, post-hardcore, instrumental workouts, combining them with the dynamics of heavy metal and topping it all off with hysterical vocal histrionics (i.e., screaming), I think I'm going to be the one screaming madly into a microphone. With Much blaring Alexisonfire and your little sister asking to borrow your Coheed and Cambria CDs, doesn't the whole screamo genre seem just a little played out?

Cody Robinson of Vancouver's End This Week With Knives thinks so, even though his band employs a similar screamo sound on their new EP *We Are So Transparent*. "I think it's great that a band like Alexisonfire can get mainstream video play, because it's really opened the door for a lot of smaller bands," he says, "but I don't really like the comparison."

Instead of trying to capitalize on what could be the next big thing, the band (which is rounded out by Dan Tompkins, Tony Patrick, Christian Cooke and soon-to-depart guitarist Stu McKillop) is already beginning to move away from the whole emo/screamo/metal/hardcore movement. "I think our new stuff is a lot more mature and less concerned with being heavy," Robinson says. "The newer material has more emphasis on melody and seems to be heading to a more rock direction—for me personally, I have a lot of indie rock influences like Modest Mouse."

Perhaps the band's desire to move on from their debut is connected to the fact that *We Are So Transparent* was recorded well over a year ago. "We actually did the album in January of 2003, but it's just getting a wide release now," Robinson explains. "It's a bit of a drawback because we only play a few songs off the CD now, but we want to have a new record out by Christmas." (JS)

SMAC daddies

SMAC (CD release party) • Roxy Theatre • Sat, May 1 After slamming out hot tunes with local roots rockers the Stone Merchants for the better part of a decade, John Armstrong felt it was time for a change. However, instead of shaving his head, moving to India or "going techno," the local musician and his bandmates decided to start a side project. The result was an improv-based band called the Ancestors.

However, instead of simply existing as two self-contained identities, the Stone Merchants soon found themselves being influenced by their alter egos. "The Stone Merchants became more improvisatory," Armstrong says, "and the Ancestors started moving away from free-form experiments to a more rooted direction."



Destroyer • With Frog Eyes • Sidetrack Cafe • Mon, Apr 26 reVUE Night's Frog Eyes hit the stage last Monday like a musical tornado full of discordant fury. The sheer intensity of singer Carey Mercer's high-pitched wailing seemed to stem most of the abundant Sidetrack crowd but they stared on in blind-eyed amusement anyway. They returned a little later with frontman Daniel Bogan as Destroyer to give a rock treatment to Bogan's usually delicate, melodic tunes. As an experiment, the combination of smooth and jagged sounds was interesting, but the renditions of the same songs on *Your Blues*. Destroyer's latest, are much more enjoyable. Bogan's versions don't work for everyone and Bogan's deep lyrical meanings were muddled by the noise. (PD)

Another important step was the addition of the didgeridoo, courtesy of longtime pal Vince Sanregret. "Vince had been playing the didgeridoo for about five or six years," Armstrong explains, "so we asked him to sit in with us on a few jams and we really liked what he added. We found that the didgeridoo became a common meeting place for the two bands."

With both bands gigging regularly and even competing with each other for gigs, the bands decided to ditch the false split and merge the two acts into one band. The result: SMAC (the Stone Merchants Ancestors Collective). Since then, the group has been making up for lost time. Their brand-new LP *Vox Populi* is their second release in a year (they released the didgeridoo-centred LP *Yiggy Yiggy* seven months ago) and features their strangest and most innovative creations yet. "We're anxious to see how people respond to it, because it is so different," says Armstrong. "We wanted to make something that was new and original, and I think we've done it." (JS)

Decontrolling interest

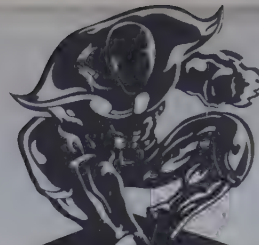
Decontrol • With Wednesday Night Heroes, the Escaped, the Operators and Hit and Run • New City • Sun, May 2 (all ages) Decontrol are one of Edmonton's best-kept secrets. You may not have seen their name on too many posters around town, but they've been playing their bone-rattling brand of punk, a combination of early English and Nordic hardcore, since the mid-'90s. They have two albums out on European and Canadian punk labels and their third set, *The Final War*, is set to be released any day now by Hardcore Holocaust Records. (Only last-minute problems with the pressing prevented it from

being ready for Sunday's show.) Decontrol are well-known in the global punk community and have sold thousands of records around the world, but in their adopted hometown, they're virtually unknown.

They started out in Saskatoon before moving to Montreal, a hotbed for all things punk. "The scene there is so great and huge it kept drawing us back in," says guitarist Rich who, like everyone in Decontrol—singer/bassist Shane and drummer Chris—uses only his first name. The band moved here last summer and have been pounding out their vitriolic antiwar songs ever since. While many punks express their allegiance to the past in the form of faded patches bearing names of bands who were old when they were still in diapers, Decontrol is a living link to the past. They take the politically charged message of early '80s punk and bring it back to life with renewed meaning and energy.

"The problems that were happening 20 years ago in the time of Discharge and everything are still happening now," Rich says. "People are still stockpiling weapons. Even if they never get used, they're still killing the world anyway."

The Final War was recorded at Riverdale Analog Recorders, a strange choice for such an aggressive-sounding album. Engineer Scott Franchuk is better known for recording folk and roots acts like Old Reliable than spitting, snarling punk, but that suited Decontrol just fine. "We were looking for someone who didn't want to be the producer or anything like that," Rich says. "Because with us, we just seem to have bad luck with that. We went in and talked to Scott and he said he knew nothing about us, so he wouldn't be able to give us any input into our style, and that's exactly what we wanted." (PD) ●



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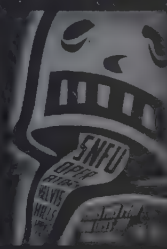
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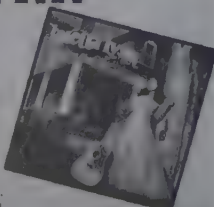
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Mary Thomas Blues Band; 9:30pm

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Winnell

HIGHRUM
Mourning Wood

J.J.'S
Force of Habit (rock); 5pm

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Brent Parkin

LEGENDS PUB
The Boom Boom Kings

MICHAEL'S PUB
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NEW CITY LIVING LOUNGE
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SEEDY'S
The Methodical Breed, Impaired

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Jimmy Whiffen

GAS PUMP
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GUILTY MARTINI
DJ Jeff

HIGHRUM
Mourning Wood

J.J.'S
Force of Habit (rock); 5pm

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GAS PUMP
Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI
DJ Jeff

HIGHRUM
Mourning Wood

J.J.'S
Force of Habit (rock); 5pm

KINGSNIGHT PUB
Brent Parkin

LEGENDS PUB
The Boom Boom Kings

MICHAEL'S PUB
Chenoweth

NEW CITY LIVING LOUNGE
Krukehead, Run Runner (CD release party); Homebrewers

THE PUB
Ron Pederson

RATTLESHAKE SALOON
Dietzel

SEEDY'S
The Methodical Breed, Impaired

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN)
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(CAPILANO) Deborah Lauren

SIDETRACK CAFE
The Constantines, The Wolfnote, Jim Guthrie, No Hands; 9pm; \$10 (adv)/\$12 (door); tickets available at Blackdryd, Freecloud, Sidetrack

URBAN LOUNGE
Timmy Whiffen

WOODCROFT HALL
Open stage presented by the Uptown Folk Club; 7-7:30 (sign-up); \$3 (non-member)/free (member)

ZENARI'S
Marco Claveria Trio

YARDWARD-SHUTE
Birth of the Cool; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$6 (member)/\$10 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

CLASSICAL

WINSPEAR CENTRE
Bobbie Pops Series: Edmonton Symphony Orchestra with Richard Hayman; 8pm; tickets start at \$25 (student/senior discounts available); tickets available at Winspear Centre box office 428-1414

WOODCROFT COMMUNITY HALL
Open stage; 7pm (sign-up); free (member); \$3 (non-member)

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NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL
DJ Shawn Z

DELANEY'S PUB AND GRILL
Music with DJ Will Hill; 9pm

RATTLESHAKE SALOON
DJ Butler

THE ROOST
Upstairs: Euro Blitz; best new European music with DJ Outlaw, DJ Jazzy and male stripper; Downstairs: female stripper; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHITE
Babylon Fridays: retro/R&B/dance with DJ Extreme

SAVOY
Electronica with DJs Bryana, Chris

THE STANDARD
Triple X Fridays: top 40/dance

STONEHOUSE PUB
Alternative, house, hip hop, top 40 with DJ Rage and DJ Alee; 9pm

SUCARBONE
Linné, ambient/IDM/electronic by Ariel and Rael

Y AFTERHOURS
House/breakbeat with Tripwitch, Sureshok, MC Floro, LP, Jilly, Dragon, Old Blitch

YOUR APARTMENT
House with DJ Tomek

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noon (after May Day march)

CURLEY MARTINI Housegroove with DJ Sunny

IRON HORSE Urban dance party with DJ 420

THE JOINT Get a Nightlife top 40/dance/urban

MANHATTAN CLUB Sinful Saturdays: top 40/dance

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL DJ Shawn Z

NEW CITY SUBURBS Saturdays 5-10:30: punk/alt/pop/dance with Blue Jay and Niroleelya

ORLANDO'S R PUB AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hill; 9pm

RATTLESHAKE SALOON DJ Butter

THE ROOST Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy; New music with DJ Dan and Mike; Downstairs: Retro music; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday: dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Deep house with Winston Roberts

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Clay

TOMIC AFTER DARK Uncensored Saturdays: R&B, hip hop, old school with Urban Metropolis Sound Crew

Y AFTERHOURS Darcy Klein, Dorovian, DJ Juley, Luke Morrison, DJ Ryan Wade

YOUR APARTMENT Nordic foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and Rackman Powers

CLASSICAL

CAFÉ SELECT Thomas Mead (lute); 5:30-9pm

JULIAN'S LOUNGE Myroslav Levitsky (piano); 5pm; \$10

MCDUGALL UNITED Church choir: We Gather at the River; Cantillon Choirs; 3pm; \$10 (adult)/\$8 (student/senior); \$7 (per person in groups of 7 or more); tickets at TIX on the Square

WINSPEAR CENTRE Midwest of Percussion: Featuring Ustad Sultan Khan, Vijay Chauhan (folk drums), Ganesh and Kumarresh (tabla), Manjuri Jagoi Marup (dancing drummers of Manipur); 8pm; \$39 (non-member); \$35 (Raga Mala member); tickets available at the Winspear box office

DJS

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Ladies Night; urban with DJ Inevitable

DECADANCE Worship Sundays: mixed with Big Daddy, DTD and guests; 10am-close

MANHATTAN CLUB Industry Sundays: top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY LIRWID LOUNGE Atmosphere: funk, rare groove, hip hop with DJ Cool Curt

THE ROOST Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bash: every long weekend with DJ Jazzy; \$2

SAVOY French Pop: mixed with Deja DJ

SUGARBOWL Multipurpose:

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Reclaim; 5pm-midnight; no cover

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL The Rusty Reed Band; 7:30-11:30pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE King Muskafa (6-piece ska/reggae band);

CARGO AND JAMES TAE SHOPPE Open stage: 7-10pm

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ECCO PUB Open jam session hosted by Imaginary Friend (blues, roots); 4-8pm

NEW CITY LIRWID LOUNGE Wednesday Night Heroes: Decontrol, The Escape Operators, Hit and Run; all ages event

O'BRYNE'S Joe Bird's Irie Jam; 9:30pm

RYECHE WHITE CHURCH Jazz and Reflections: Sandro Dominielli Quartet; 3:30-5pm; 4:35-6:17pm

ROSEBOWL Sunday Jam; 10pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Under the Covers Sundays: Connors Road, DJ Dudeman; 9pm; \$6

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CLASSICAL

CAFÉ SELECT Thomas Mead (lute); 5:30-9pm

LEGENDS PUB Open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

O'BRYNE'S Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends; 9-10pm

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tony Dizon

SIDETRACK CAFÉ C7, Mervin Allen (ex-Anneka), Inside Every Scar; 9pm; \$6 (door)

YARDHEAD SUITE Tuesday Jam Session: hosted by Martin Walters (trumpet); 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$3

DJS

BILLY BOE'S LOUNGE Karaoke and DJ Tues with Run Riot Professional Music Productions

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Viva: with DJ Sean

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Basement: Tuesdays: hip hop/R&B/reggae/dancehall with Bomb Squad, DJ Inevitable, Q.B.

DECADANCE Too Cool for Tuesdays: Ambient, Trip hop, goa and glitch with Galatea, Bistroom and guests

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MUSIC

Epic ambitions

Edmonton's Ten Second Epic want more than just 15 minutes of fame

By PHIL DUPERRON

The five guys in Edmonton's Ten Second Epic are an inspiring example of how much a little hard work, dedication and talent can accomplish. While many bands have moved to bigger cities to seek their fame and fortune, they're living proof it can still be done right here.

Since day one, the bandmates have happily skipped out on work, school, friends and family to rehearse and play while aggressively promoting themselves. "You never get anything handed to you," says bassist Sandy MacKinnon. "You have to work your balls off to get something happening."

After selling copies of their first two demos and a slew of shirts at their huge sold-out show at Red's to celebrate the release of *Famous Last Words*, Ten Second Epic reinvested the cash in *One More for the Road*, their first release on local label Farway Records. Recorded by engineer/co-producer Real Cardinal at his home studio Nocturnal Productions, *One More* shows a rapidly maturing band quickly coming into their own. "A lot of our songs pertain to growing up and your response to growing up," says lead singer and lyricist Andrew Usenik. "Change, conflicts, everything you can think of. We write what we know and what we know right now is that we're in that stage where life is changing."

Guitarist Craig Spelliscy says Car-

dinal, who normally records electronic music, had a powerful influence on the band's pop-laden punk tunes. In fact, the relaxed atmosphere Cardinal created—working out of a studio control room that doubles as his bedroom—perfectly suited the band's DIY ethic and helped them make the most of the time they had. "It was nothing fancy," Spelliscy says, "but I think if you have the right know-how of your gear and you have well-written songs, you can do wonders in the basement. That's kinda been proven in Edmonton. No one's going to these huge studios, everybody's recording with friends or in basements and it's cool to see that."

The band—which is rounded out by drummer Patrick Birtles and singer/guitarist Daniel Carriere (who

will sit the show and the tour out due to recent surgery on a fractured finger)—are obviously excited to get the new disc in hand. But they see it principally as a tool to attract people to the meat of the matter, their live show. "It's great we can make CDs," Usenik says. "It's awesome to listen to our stuff recorded, but at the end of the day we play music because we love to play live. It's the best thing in the world. There's nothing that can replace the energy between you and the people listening to you. No studio will ever be able to replicate that energy."

THE BAND PROMOTES ITSELF with the same tireless energy: they blanket the city with posters every time they have a show to get the local crowds out, while Usenik has harnessed the power of the Internet to raise their profile nationally and internationally. Usenik's campaign to get the band's demos posted

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throughout the web scene in North America has especially paid off; not only did their songs receive thousands of hits, but a talent scout for American management powerhouse OMG Universal stumbled across them on a Chicago-based site as well, and helped make them the first Canadian band on their roster. With their help Ten Second Epic are about to embark on a two-month voyage throughout the States and Canada.

"The whole reason we're going on this tour is because of [OMG]," Usenik says. "I mean, if you're a

young band without a release out yet, who's gonna book you down in Texas? No one even cares about you. There's so many bands in this city right now with so much talent, but because of how difficult it is to tour extensively, they can't tour. We've been given this amazing opportunity, so obviously we're gonna seize the day and take it." ●

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heaviest songs we've ever written."

Anyone attending their show will get a nice sample of these new tunes and, if past incidents are any indication, have a raucous good time. On their last spin through Edmonton, for example, they ran into some problems for having a bit too much "fun" at a place they fondly remember as the "the venue equivalent of Chuck E. Cheese's." "We invited a bunch of kids onstage last time," Pettit recalls, "and the club got all angry at us and called promoters from other shows.

From then on we had to sign these pieces of paper before we played saying we wouldn't incite violence and do all sorts of crazy things that we didn't do. Like, they made us sign sheets saying we wouldn't expose ourselves, but I don't remember exposing myself. But if you're that worried about it, I guess I'll sign." ●

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Flamboyant '90s rockers Urge Overkill dust off the medallions for reunion tour

BY JENNY FENIAK

It's been almost 10 years since the over-the-top pop-rock group Urge Overkill parted ways at the end of their *Exit the Dragon* tour in 1995. But a few years ago National "Nash" Kato and Ed "King" Roeser, who founded the Chicago-based group in 1985, decided their chemistry was worth reviving.

"I had no doubt that Nash and I could still work together on an artistic level as long as the sort of personal stuff was out of the way," Roeser says. "That's just sort of run its course. I just didn't even feel it anymore and now we get along great. There are a lot of great musicians out there, but often, unless you meet somebody else, one or two people with whom you can get some chemistry going, it just sort of never happens for you."

As for drummer Blackie Onassis... well, that's another story. When he joined the group in the early '90s, he brought with him a funk-up style of drumming and a penchant for



flashy fashions that raised the indie band to new heights of popularity—until it all fell apart in a messy split fueled by in-fighting, personality conflicts and drug abuse. "We just thought, overall this has a much better chance of surviving and thriving if we just stick to how it started out," Roeser says. Instead, Kato and Roeser recruited drummer Nate Arling from Last Vegas and Gaza Strippers gui-

tarist Mike Hodgkiss to play bass for the new lineup.

But the real challenge for Kato and Roeser may be recapturing the band's flamboyant heyday. At the height of their fame, the group was notorious for driving around town in convertibles, drinking champagne and martinis while modelling their stylish suits, crazy shades and signature Urge medallions. Even with the grunge era in full swing, the band's trippy, heavy-ended pop songs about TV shows and mind-altered realities found an eager audience. After the success of their 1991 album *The Supersonic Storybook*, they were rewarded with the opening slot for Nirvana's *Nevermind* tour, and when Quentin Tarantino gave their cover of Neil Diamond's "Girl, You'll Be a Woman Soon" (which originally

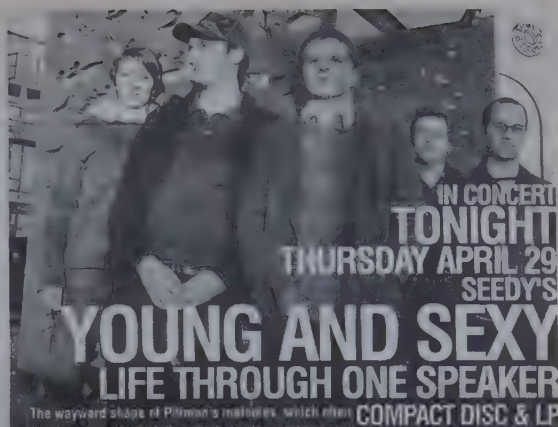
appeared on their 1992 EP *Stull*) a high-profile slot on the soundtrack to *Pulp Fiction*, they seemed poised to hit the stratosphere.

DITCHING THE INDIE LABEL Touch and Go Records, which had carried their first three full-length albums, Urge Overkill signed with Geffen Records and released *Saturation* in 1993. The upbeat record was Urge Overkill's most successful release, but it came with a hefty price tag as the pressures of success and squabbles among the band members put the band's future in jeopardy. Their final album, *Exit the Dragon*, exposed the darkness that was taking over the band. Roeser quit the following year.

Roeser and Kato made attempts at solo careers, but neither met with the success they had enjoyed as a team. Roeser insists their decision to revive Urge Overkill isn't about making a few bucks or capitalizing on their past reputation. They're testing the waters, exploring fresh musical directions (along with new approaches to their old material) with their revamped lineup and if everything goes smoothly, there's a good chance a new Urge Overkill record will be released before the year is through. ●

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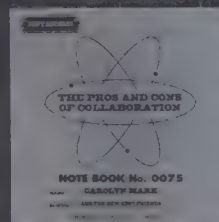


The wayward shape of Pitman's melodies, which then abandon symmetry to follow the lyric idea, makes every statement provisional. It's as if he were wandering through corridors of thought and feeling, with no expectation that the next turn will reveal the solution.

His tunes snake into your mind like old good pop. —Globe and Mail

a storybook of a record — easily one of the most charming stories I've heard in awhile. The orchestration is lovely and the lyrics represent some of the cleverest pop musings ever penned... I am utterly beguiled! —Chart

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MUSIC



classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

Prom and proper

It was 9 a.m. Monday morning, and the window onto the balcony was open as we enjoyed our after-breakfast coffee. The radio was on, so it took a moment to realize we were being serenaded live: a playful trombone led the way, then a trumpet. We could have sworn the source was located directly below us, but a survey revealed nothing but the usual traffic and scurrying figures. And the bandstand in the park kitty-corner from us was empty. Yet the serenade continued, and we followed the mixture of nonsense notes and melody to a balcony a full block away. That Holiday Inn could have been a street corner in New Orleans 20 years ago.

As often happens, not everyone shares the same sense of fun, and the morning fanfare was quickly shushed, the players no doubt hustled away to breakfast and the day's competitions. From April 21 to May 5, the Kiwanis Music Festival has taken over all available venues in Edmonton. Participants

have come from as far away as Manitoba, Ontario, British Columbia. More good news: the competitions are open to the public, and most of them are free. The Kiwanis Music Festival Association has the lowdown. And as for those musicians blaring their high spirits out into the clear air, my thanks. It was a wonderful start for my week.

Sometimes we forget the fun of playing (and listening to) music, worrying instead about perfection, about first-place finishes, about being seen in the glamorous places. It's good to be reminded that the love of music is bigger and better than just money and prestige and the star system. And no music group has more fun than the Mill

It's good to be reminded that the love of music is bigger and better than just money and prestige and the star system.

Creek Colliery Band, which offered its annual tribute *At the Proms* last weekend at Convocation Hall. Just in case there's some confusion, we're not talking graduation dances here; we're talking about one of those quaint English customs, like the British brass band tradition itself.

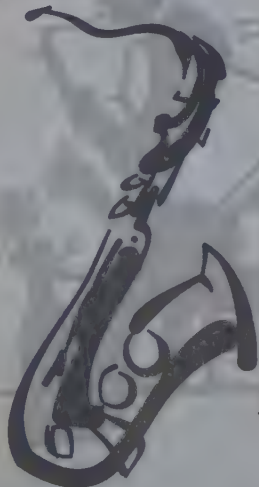
The Henry Wood Promenade Concerts Season (nicknamed "the Proms"), which now includes over 70 main concerts, started in the late 19th century as a single concert held at Royal Albert Hall in London, England. Many in the audience at Convocation Hall had been to the Proms themselves and applauded host Jeremy Spurgeon's account of

queuing up for several blocks to get into Royal Albert Hall's arena section. "After all," he said, "the hall only holds 6,000." Other Proms traditions include marches, singalongs, unabashed British jingoism, fine soloists (on this occasion Matt Clark on euphonium, Nancy McBride on cornet and Doreen Kuschminder on flugelhorn), a wide range of music and an informal atmosphere. During the easy banter between Spurgeon and the Colliery Band's resident conductor, Malcolm Forsyth, Spurgeon pointed out that "most people begin their careers as organists." The popular Edmonton organist also admitted he once played the trombone. Though its season is ended, the Colliery Band hosts the Fourth Annual Prairie Brass Band Festival on May 7 and 8.

High spirits also mark the current production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *South Pacific*, which opened last Saturday and finishes tonight (Thursday) at 7:30 p.m. at Jubilee Auditorium. The production offers a blend of opera and musical theatre and ends the society's 40th anniversary season on a cheerful note. The unveiling of the new season, which makes use of five temporary locations during the renovation of the Jubilee, is also carefully staged.

Much is made of the cast in a production such as *South Pacific*. Sometimes we forget to recognize the creative forces behind the scenes. Robert Shannon's set is as beautiful as it is brilliant, and costume designer Deanna Finnman and lighting designer Bretta Gerncke deserve special mention as well. ●

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BY SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

All I am saying is give Peas a chance

If ever there was a sign that hip-hop has crossed over into the mainstream, it was last Sunday's meet and greet at West Edmonton Mall with the Black Eyed Peas (who played a concert that night at Red's). Imagine 2,000 screaming teenage girls donning "I Love B.E.P." and "I Will Do Anything for Black Eyed Peas Tickets" signs. Group members Fergie, will.i.am, Taboo and Apl.De.Ap took the time to personalize the shirts and CD covers with random pictures of monkeys, trees and stick figures and overall, the day went pretty smoothly.

That mood completely changed when one boy approached Taboo near the end of the two-hour autograph session to tell him the group disappointed him with their last album, and they were losing longtime fans with their new sound. (Oddly, he was willing to wait in line for hours to drop this bomb.) Taboo was obviously rattled, drawing defences from the "group progression" and "we can't please everyone" banks.

Undoubtedly the BEP sound has undergone drastic alterations over the last couple of years. Contrary to popular impressions, the group had three albums under their belt before releasing their latest disc, the pop-influenced *Elephunk*. Two of them in particular are still held in high regard by many hip-hop heads as party albums for the non-converted. 1998's *Behind the Front* even broke into urban clubs with the hit "Joints and Jams." While the song didn't do much for the BEP legacy, it can still frequently be heard in some local clubs, depending on the depth of the DJ's record collection. More memorable are the other two singles from the album—the boom-bap-influenced "Falling Up" and the Afro-Cuban sounds of "Karma."

While 2000's *Bridging the Gap* showed a slightly more melodic side of the group, songs like "Cali to New York," "Rap Song" and "Get Original" kept it from being labeled a weak crossover attempt. Cameos by Esthero, Jurassic 5's Chali2na, De La Soul, Les Nubians and Mos Def didn't hurt either.

The most notable (and unsurprisingly, least-known) discs to come out of the Peas' pod, however, are will.i.am's solo efforts. The group's former frontman (his spot has arguably been assumed by pop/R&B eye candy Fergie) released two soundtracks on BBE Records: 2001's *Lost Change*, featuring guest appearances by Terry Dexter, Medusa and Planet Asia and ranging from jungle to instrumental hip-hop and jazz, is the stronger of the two, although the presence of MC Lyte, Tash (of the Alkaholiks), KRS One



and Supernatural on 2003's more predictable *Must B 21*, may pique some listeners' interest.

Still, when a group undergoes such an extreme makeover as Black Eyed Peas did with *Elephunk*, longtime fans tend to take it personally. But despite *Elephunk*'s shallow lyrics (the worst in the group's history), its high-energy production values easily allow it to compete with anyone else on the charts—and that was obviously their mission. After all, a suc-

cessful crossover is one of the most difficult feats in all of hip-hop—just ask Cee-Lo, whose should-have-been-a-hit new disc, *Cee-Lo Green Is the Soul Machine*, has been all but shelved after only six weeks in stores.

Will.i.am said it best in an interview on www.bbemusic.com: "I'm trying to bridge the gap to those close-minded people who think hip-hop is only a certain way because they've just been listening to it for so long." ●



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NEW SOUNDS

THE CHURCH FORGET YOURSELF (COOKING VINYL/TRUE NORTH)

Thanks to the lasting nostalgia value of their one big hit, "Under the Milky Way," the Church are often dismissed as one-hit wonders. Truth be known, the Church are one of Australia's most enduring bands—a quarter-century later, they're still together.

Musically, the Church are as reliable as a good Toyota. Those six or seven of you who have closely followed their career will know what to expect here: sweeping guitar interplay and complex harmonies not usually associated with modern rock. For fans of modern psychedelic bands like Spiritualized, Mercury Rev or the Flaming Lips, the Church make for seminal listening. But what makes *Forget Yourself*, the band's 17th (!) album, so darn interesting is the fact that Steve Kilbey is at a philosophical crossroads; for a band called the Church, it's more than a little significant to put out a record with songs that question the

need for religion.

In "Sealine," Kilbey vows that no matter how large the miracle, he will not follow a nameless subject "to the sea;" in the bass-driven rocker "Lay Low," he warns that these are times when intellectuals must put "pain before philosophy"; and, in "Nothing Seeker," he questions the quest for eternal life. "It's useless when the ending becomes endless," he asserts. *Forget Yourself* is a musically complex, challenging album that deserves to be heard. Shame that it won't happen. ★★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

WIL BOTH HANDS (CAPITOL/EMI)

Calgary singer-songwriter William Mimnaugh doesn't just write sophisticated songs. He drags on them, kicks them around and makes them bleed. That kind of intensity is the core of *Both Hands*, a disarming mishmash of rich lyricism and technological savvy. But the songs that

work best for Mimnaugh are portraits like "Mama" and "Both Hands," in which we're introduced to characters who are either barely holding their worlds together, or stumbling over the wreckage. Songs like "15 Years" feel like the prologue to larger stories, ones you can only hope Mimnaugh will feel compelled to explore. Other tunes, like "Dance With The Devil," feel conventional and uninspired by comparison. Still, there's a potent imagination at work here, and a burning passion to drive it along. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

W.A.S.P. THE NEON GOD: PART I—THE RISE (SANCTUARY/BMG)

Yes, Blackie Lawless, the man who could once make Ozzy Osbourne's antics look like kid stuff, is back with a series of studio musicians (including former Quiet Riot drummer Frankie Banali) all working under the W.A.S.P. banner.

What could the world possibly need less than a new W.A.S.P. record? How about a W.A.S.P. rock opera, complete with Deep Purple-style electric organ solos from Lawless and, get this, the odd trumpet flourish or two. Or 10. Actually, 10,000.

Yes, it's a concept album... bring back the '70s! *Tommy*, *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway* and *2112* (as a Canadian, you are not allowed to make fun of 2112, though) can only pretend to be as pretentious as this thing. The metal has been beaten out of Lawless, although maybe you could

loosely call some of it "hard rock." And judging from the crypto-Christian plot (a street kid becomes a new messiah and then has to decide if he has truly found God or not) Lawless has had the rock 'n' roll devil exorcised out of him too.

Wow. I now live in a world where Blackie Lawless beats me over the head with a Christian story that's about as subtle as those *Left Behind* books, and all in 15/4 time, to boot! But there is one, even more terrifying notion: the album title says this is just *Part I*. ★★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

BEN KWELLER ON MY WAY (ATO/RCA)

If there's a recurring theme on Ben Kweller's latest disc, it's the search for salvation, usually in the affections of a girl. Still, if Kweller is getting older—and he seems to admit that he is on "The Rules," in which he talks about "standing up like a man" and pleads, "I need direction"—he's not quite there yet. He's definitely trying to be less precious in his songwriting, drawing deep from the well of '70s rock 'n' roll and coming up with some solid tunes. Kweller's voice is strongest on songs like the title track, which uses elegant imagery to vault from the violent impulses of machismo to the calming seduction of romance. It's a list of things you learn when you grow up, and it's going to be interesting to see where Kweller winds up down the road. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

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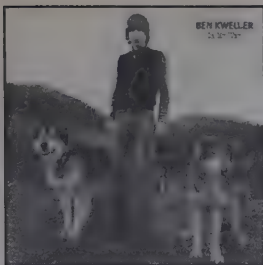
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LOCAL H
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO P.J. SOLES?
(EARSHOT/COLUMBIA)

P.J. Soles starred in such late '70s cult classics like *Halloween* and *Rock 'n' Roll High School* before quickly fading into obscurity—kind of like Chicago duo Local H, who banded around the outskirts of the '90s college rock scene without ever making much of an impact. They're still on the outskirts in 2004, looking at the state of rock 'n' roll and wondering what happened to the fun and the fury. *Whatever Happened* is full of glib commentaries on pop culture, but its execution displays nothing but reverence before the power of the almighty Rock Gods. Whether they're stabbing at



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Welcome to Winners (Sanctuary)
Sleek, hummable lite-rock that I was quite enjoying until it dawned on me that it's basically a 45-minute version Semi-sonic's "Closing Time."

Chrome Yellow Co.
Red Light Runners (Northern Light)
Yowza. This album kicks my ass. Something wicked awesome this way comes.

Various Artists
Tantra Lounge: Exotic Indian Electronica (Water Music)
Great soundtrack music for your next Indian porno flick. (Insert "Bollywood" joke here.)

John and the Sisters
John and the Sisters (Northern Blues)
Outta-sight blues from the garage and the great beyond. The perfect combination of croak and swagger.

Novanova
Memories (F Communications)
Novanova: boringboring!

The Mammals
Rock That Babe (Signature Sounds)
Standard-issue folksy bluegrass, but the banjo is smoking.

Pipi Skid
Funny Farm (Peanuts and Corn)
The first wave of Buck 65 wannabes is here. At least Skid was first at something.

David Mead
Indiana (Netwerk)
Sort of like Paul Simon at his sleeptime best.

Knoc-turn'al
The Way I Am (Elektra)
Okay, lemme get this straight. You're tough, you grew up in the hood and you got a real big dick. Wow, groundbreaking shit, man.

Trey Anastasio
Seis De Mayo (Elektra)
That title roughly translates to "pretentious douchebag" and leaves one wondering, did Michael Eisner commission this?

Prince
Musicology (NPG)
Like rich cheesecake, you take a bite and you're all "Holy shit, dude, this is FUCKING AMAZING." Then after 10 mouthfuls you puke and fall into a diabetic coma.

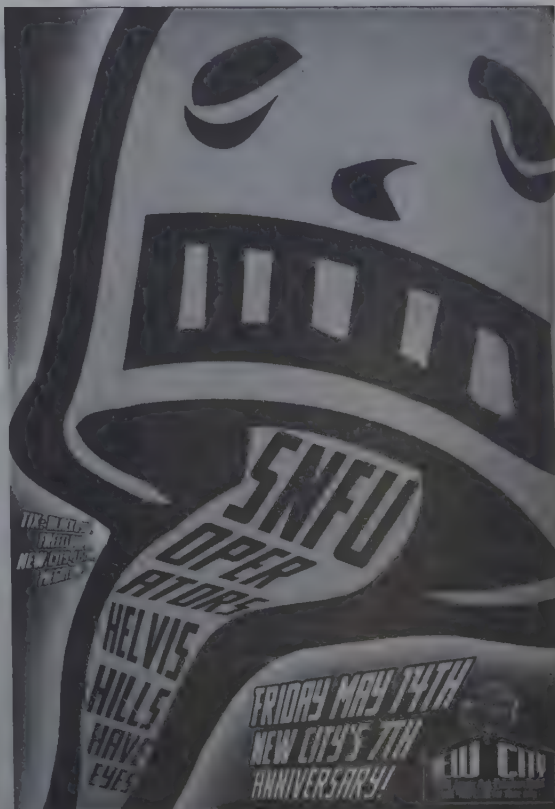
Various Artists
CKUA Alive From the Vault: Volume 1 (Independent)
A noble station, a fine disc! Consume! CONSUME!

Eric Clapton
Me and Mr. Johnson (Reprise)
A fitting testament, but what exactly was wrong with Robert Johnson's versions?

Ember Swift
Disarming (Few'll Ignite)
As the owner of a Y chromosome, I am fortunately immune to this armpit folk bullshit.

The Bigger Lovers
This Affair Never Happened... And Here Are Eleven Songs About It (Yep Roc)
Peppy pickers put pen to paper and produce pleasant pop pizzazz.

Castline
Distorto Pop Syrup (Independent)
Firstbanditis abounds. Production and playing are passable, but the songs need a serious massage.



MUSIC

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root
down

By JENNY FENIAK

Cool customers

Birth of the Cool • Featuring P.J. Perry, Rubim de Toledo, Ken Hoffman, Dean McNeill, Craig Brennan, Leonard Swanson, Jordan Faulds, Chris Andrew and Lyle Molzan • Yardbird Suite • Fri-Sat, Apr 30-May 1 Trumpet player Miles Davis and arranger Gil Evans broke new ground in the world of jazz with the release of his *Birth of the Cool* recordings in 1949 and 1950, which melded the frantic circumlocutions of bebop with a new approach that was airier, more laid-back, more, well, "cool."

"I was so attracted to this recording," explains Rubim de Toledo, bassist with the local Latin band Bombal and the visionary behind this weekend's *Birth of the Cool* tribute performance at the Yardbird, "but because of the limited audio quality of the album, I knew I was missing something. I could only imagine what these arrangements would sound like live. That was my inspiration for putting this project together."

De Toledo volunteered his idea to baritone sax player Ken Hoffman when they were working together on a CKUA project last fall. Skilled at copying and arranging music, Hoffman quickly joined forces with de Toledo and began seeking out players to fill the shoes of Davis and Evans's original nonet. (De Toledo was responsible for recruiting the rhythm section while Hoffman called up his wind and brass contacts.) "We're really lucky that we got P.J. Perry to get on board," Hoffman says, "cause he's pretty much the quintessential jazz saxophone player in Canada.... It's quite an impressive résumé if you put everything together on one sheet of paper."

LPs weren't around in 1950, which meant the original *Birth of the Cool* recordings had to be squeezed onto 78s, forcing the songs to be condensed into two or three minutes. "We've extended some of the tunes because we've got all these great solos," Hoffman explains. "You want to give them a chance to develop their ideas within the context of the piece a bit more. But we've spent a significant amount of time sitting down and figuring out where it's appropriate to do that and to try and maintain the integrity of the overall composition. There's such an interesting combination of musical backgrounds that I'd like to think that maybe we could distill our own sound out of this whole thing."

Porch song trilogy

Back Porch Swing • The Black Dog (Sat, May 1) • With Barley Wik

and the Swampflowes: Sidetrack Café (Wed, May 19) Penny Malmberg claims she was an acoustic closet case and it wasn't until her husband Jim dragged her out of it that she began to thrive as a public performer. Soon they'd been playing and writing songs together long enough that it was time to dedicate a few to tape. (She plays guitar while Jim plays mandolin.) Those few tracks grew into a list long enough to fill an entire CD and they turned to bass player Kevin Jacobson, who had played with Jim in the local band Sticks and Stones back in 1999, and fiddler Cam Neufeld to help finish the job. "We had jammed with both those players, so we knew how they played," Malmberg explains. The group adopted the name Back Porch Swing, and their self-titled CD was released last April. It was recorded in Jacobson's own studio, known simply as the Cave.

The Malmbergs went into the studio on their own and, using just one mic, recorded their songs live off the floor. "It sounds more realistic to what we really sound like, rather than a bunch of overdubs and retaping," Malmberg explains.

Back Porch Swing's sound is exactly what you'd expect from their name—an old-fashioned mix of jazz and bluegrass that's been catnip to festival promoters. "We do a lot of old stuff from the '20s and '30s, some traditional songs and some Western swing tunes," Malmberg explains. "It's a lost art. If people don't continue to play [them] from time to time, they're going to be these lost, beautiful songs." ☐

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The skits just keep on coming

The Morrison Project is a triumph of no-budget comic filmmaking

By JAMES ELFORD

The fresh-faced cinemanaughts of Blacklisted Productions don't expect everyone to love their new film, *The Morrison Project*. But, like a certain brand of Canadian beer, they expect the people who like it, will like it a lot.

"It's not for everybody," explains producer Bree Dreger. "We didn't want to make a movie for everybody, so I guess it is more of a cult-type movie. There will be big fans and some people just won't appreciate it, and we're prepared for that."

"Its playing at the Princess," adds director/writer/actor Riley Beach, "so you expect 'different' movies to play there. While we want to do things for ourselves, this is aimed at an audience.... It's just not a huge audience."

If making an esoteric movie was their goal, they've succeeded. *The Morrison Project* is odd—often willfully so. It pulls no punches in its pursuit of a very particular brand of humour, and will likely elicit reactions ranging from shock and confusion to laughter and even possibly disgust. It's a surreal journey that presents itself as a tale spun by the "greatest grandpa in the world," Earnest Ol' Pete. But that's really just a skeleton for a *Monty Python*/Mr. Show-style collection of sketches examining such unlikely subjects as a modest serial killer, a man's paranoid defense of his suburban home, an attempt to grow the world's greatest grandfather and a post-apocalyptic trio trying to repopulate the earth's plant life.

"We decided to make it a bunch of short movies," Beach says, "or try to make it so it could be sectioned

off into pieces and sent in parts, if need be, to festivals. So we could have a multipurpose movie that could debut in Edmonton and be broken up and fired off and make as much use of it as we could."

The various segments all employ the same core performers, all of whom play multiple roles. And if you've seen any locally-produced comedy films over the last couple of years, you'll be familiar with their faces; they're all part of the Draft Six, whose résumé includes such titles as *The Sonic Brooms*, *Purple Gas* and *Turnbuckle*. "Instead of trying to find 50 different people," Dreger says, "we talked to [Draft Sixer Kevin Gillese], who approached his friends and they asked to take it on as a group and play various parts and we were game for that. They also had



experiences with *Turnbuckle* and *Sonic Brooms* and putting on premieres and with grants so they ended up helping us in more ways than just acting."

HANG ON HERE—shouldn't those be the kind of skills these recent NAIT graduates should have gotten from the radio and television program where they met? "NAIT is a really news-oriented program and they're constantly trying to make it better," Dreger says, "because when we left we didn't feel prepared enough for the producer role. I didn't know enough about grants or producing or these areas. But I'm happy to say that they are starting to offer more." Dreger adds that she and fellow Blacklisted member Justin Lachance are happily enrolled in the school's new 16-month Producers Emergence Program, which is designed to help radio and television graduates or those with some industry experience prep pitches for broadcasters.

"NAIT gives you a good base pro-

gram so that you learn everything you can [about] technical [matters] and writing and stuff," Lachance says, "but if you want to perfect it and really get it down then you have to go out and do it. That's how the industry works. As filmmakers you have to do these lower-budget films to get bigger funds from the government to show you have credibility and skills. If you are emerging, though, this is the best way to get into the loop."

AND THE MORRISON PROJECT was certainly a low-budget affair. Like all local productions seem to be, the film was made possible more through the goodwill and hard work of altruistic friends than the presence of deep-pocketed investors (although a \$10,000 Alberta Foundation for the Arts grant to cover hard costs like costumes and equipment definitely came in handy). Locations were supplied by friends of the production team and no one got paid. The lack of funds forced the group to be creative, especially when it came time to promote the film—they came up with ideas like distributing trading cards (collect all four!) and importing a troupe of breakdancing grandpas to perform at the premiere.

Working against the *Morrison Project* team is the fact that Alberta is not exactly known as a filmmaking hot spot, but right now they have no plans to seek out greener (and warmer) pastures. "There's a lot of talent here and we could definitely keep working here for a while," says Lachance. "I think that Edmonton has a potential for greatness and that everyone who comes to see this will be helping out. I think if we keep on making movies then maybe we'll get a buzz and the money will come back." ●

THE MORRISON PROJECT
Directed by Riley Beach • Written by Riley Beach and Nathan Fleishauer • Starring Kevin Gillese, Ian Rowe, Josh Dean, Chris Connelly, Jana O'Connor and William Minsky • Opens Fri, Apr 30

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Spy in the house of porn

Demonlover's fractured narrative conceals a visionary take on corporate amorality

By JOSÉF BRAUN

Dismissed as incomprehensible upon its 2002 debut at Cannes, championed by some of North America's smartest critics as it trickled into theatres throughout 2003 and finally opening in Edmonton this week at Metro Cinema, Olivier Assayas's *Demonlover* may be perplexing in a way that few films are, but it is also utterly fascinating in a manner that's equally rare. Its detractors would call it a failed corporate espionage thriller that falls apart before it's even halfway over, but such a critique isn't just a grand failure of imagination that misses the whole damn point, it's a way for viewers to lazily excuse themselves from engaging with an artist's invitation to debate some of the most crucial (and accessible) ideas in the modern world. That's part of the trick here: *Demonlover* is sophisticated, but in a way its ideas are actually rather obvi-

ous. (This, I think, is a good thing.)

Appropriately enough for a film this unstable, *Demonlover* begins in the air, between destinations and, as we soon realize, destinies. We're on a plane, in a slightly exaggerated luxurious first-class compartment. Most of the passengers are sleeping while on the overhead television screens we see explosions and bodies in flames—images of violence so acceptable that they have no effect on the artificially serene atmosphere of the cabin. Real acts of violence are also occurring on the plane: Diane (Con-

REVUE THRILLER

nie Nielsen) is injecting Haldol into the drinking water of Karen, a co-worker from the international acquisitions firm she works for, doping her up to facilitate her abduction at the hands of Diane's secret cohorts when they touch down in Paris. This abduction allows a rival company to gain access to information regarding a hot new Japanese 3D porn project and paves the way for Diane to take over Karen's position while she's recovering in hospital.

After establishing that our protagonist is a ruthless corporate spy, Assayas then sets about familiarizing

us with the industries that Diane moves within, both openly and clandestinely. We see several scenes of businesspeople gazing at screens displaying animated or live-action images of rape, torture, killing. Oddly enough, even though Diane is apparently the most ruthless of the film's central characters, her ostensibly cool gaze is the only one that registers the slightest hint of revulsion (a testament to Nielsen's remarkably complex, never quite opaque performance). According to the reps from *demonlover.com*, some potential buyers who want to dominate the international animé porn market are untroubled by the ethical issues involved in their product's content. Profitability alone casts a veil of hipness and moral irrelevance over any product—even, say, a website that allows users to design the on-camera torture of women being held prisoner in a grimy cell somewhere in Russia.

DEMONLOVER'S BIG SUBJECT is the labyrinth of control and distribution being built up around morally sticky behaviour. What was once considered private sin becomes public: the Internet allows public companies to control private aberrance, and since the Net is decidedly interactive,



Connie Nielsen in *Demonlover*

those who enact their aberrant fantasies through their home computer control in turn the actions of their supplier. The circuitry of sex, violence, withdrawal and control is clearly illustrated in the image of Chloé Sevigny (as Diane's unhappy assistant) playing a videogame naked in a hotel room. Assayas is digging further into an unpleasant social territory David Cronenberg investigated 20 years ago in *Videodrome* (and several subsequent films, such as *eXistenZ*), and as Diane begins to slide between illusion and reality, the film acquires disquieting similarities to the dreamlike vocabulary of websites, videogames and DVDs.

But what *Demonlover* most reminded me of was not a film or a videogame but the novels of one of my favourite contemporary authors, Don DeLillo. Assayas's characters, con-

sumed with external forces and rewards, have designed their lives to submit to powers they can't and don't want to understand. Like the characters in DeLillo's terrific '70s novels *Players* or *Running Dog* (which deals with the international market for obscure erotic art and Hitler fetishism), they enter a situation with a desire to dominate but exit it through complete and total submission. And the chilling final image of *Demonlover* tells us that some cages are more deliberate and collaborative than any individual can possibly fathom. **●**

DEMONLOVER

Written and directed by Olivier Assayas

• Starring Connie Nielsen, Charles Berling, Chloé Sevigny and Gina Gershon • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, Apr 30-May 3 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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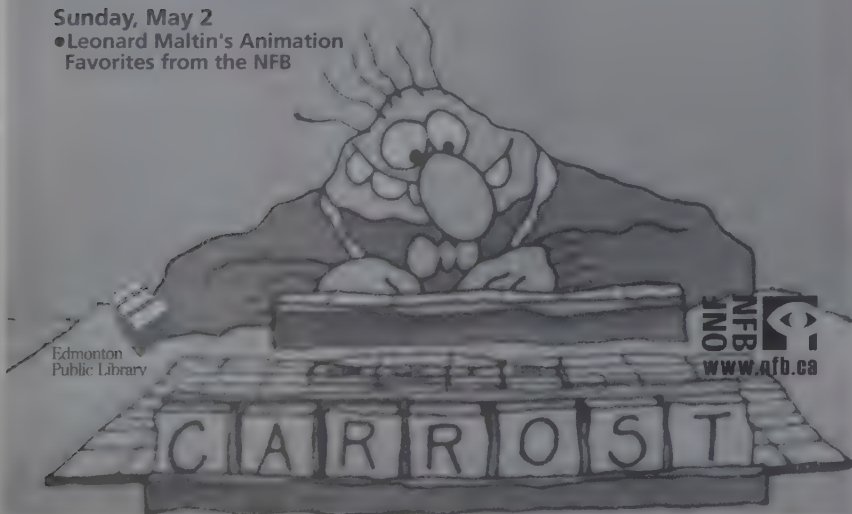
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The devil's clone

Kinnear, Romijn-Stamos and De Niro (or possibly their evil duplicates) stink up *Godsend*

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

When will parents ever learn? If your kid dies, no matter how tragically, no matter how wonderful and happy things were when he was alive, it's a fool's game to try to clone him. It can only end in disaster, or in the case of *Godsend*, a disastrous movie.

Godsend is curiously top-heavy with acting talent; its slate of Greg Kinnear, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and Robert De Niro is roughly equivalent to, say, Greg Kinnear, Helen Hunt and Jack Nicholson in *As Good As It Gets*. And yet it's all for naught; as soon as the movie begins it's kinda smelly and it only gets stinkier from there.

We begin with Kinnear and Romijn-Stamos as impossibly happy and optimistic parents celebrating the impossibly happy and hopeful eighth birthday of their impossibly happy and sweet-seeming son Adam. Sure enough, all this impossible happiness soon proves not to be possible and one car-related kid-crushing later, Kinnear and Romijn-Stamos descend into clunky and entirely predictable grief scenes, only to be interrupted by a vaguely Satanic-looking Robert De Niro, who offers to clone their kid. Kinnear, being the soft and squishy right-thinking fellow that he is, has doubts, but Romijn-Stamos has too much mommy movie-grief to let this once-in-a-lifetime crappy opportunity go by, so she agrees to the procedure. One quick implant and an eight-years-later transition later we're back where we started, except this time eight-year-old Adam is a clone.

At this point, there's nothing for the audience to do except idly wonder How Shall This Kid Be Evil? Will he be haunted by the ghost of his former self? Did De Niro put screw genes in him for some reason? Is

there some Satanic angle waiting to be revealed? That the answer turns out to be no, no and yes, but not in that order, is little reward for having to put up with watching the Evil blandly unfold.

For evil Adam 2.0 proves to be. He starts off having creepy, nonsensical dreams, segues into disruptive antisocial behaviour before moving on to hungry glances at hatchets and the claw-ends of hammerheads. Now he says cute things like "You know, I don't think I like you so much anymore" to his dad, plus we know he's evil since his flat, affectless "I'm Evil" stare contrasts sharply with his pre-clone's ridiculously joyful demeanour.

AND SO *GODSEND* SHLUMPS along with all the characters starting, muddling and ending the same, Kinnear acting worried,

Romijn-Stamos acting oblivious and De Niro acting like

he's got something to hide. An evil shed makes a few appearances, there's a visit to some woman's house to have some boring piece of the puzzle handed over and then the film dribbles its way toward its conclusion, pausing only long enough to muddy everything up with a truly lame scene in which Kinnear and De Niro argue in a church ('cuz this whole situation's just one big fat affront to God, see?) and then walk out with everything on fire for some reason.

It's easy to understand the appeal of *Godsend*'s premise; cloning is new and scary and presents all kinds of unusual moral dilemmas to the aspiring filmmaker. The clone-movie is a mini-genre waiting to be born. But *Godsend*'s wishy-washy Styrofoam characters and not-so-scary scary bits hardly add up to anything compelling, and its final twist does nothing except let the last puff of air wheeze out of the story. Someday somebody will make a really good clone movie, one that pushes us and makes us wonder what truly makes us human, yadda yadda yadda, but *Godsend* ain't it. ☹

GODSEND

Directed by Nick Hamm • Written by Mark Bomback • Starring Greg Kinnear, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and Robert De Niro • Opens Fri, Apr 30

Don't mess with exes

Pierce Brosnan and Julianne Moore mix love and divorce in amiable *Laws of Attraction*

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

Romantic comedies should be funny. Ideally, they should be hilarious. Failing that, they must at least have some kind of believable chemistry between the romantic leads. With *Laws of Attraction*, the new romantic comedy gluing Julianne Moore to Pierce Brosnan, we have the latter but not the former, a movie that's fun but not funny, that supplies not a lot of laughs but plenty of warm smiles and pulses of enjoyment watching the two stars bounce off each other.

Laws of Attraction is a love story set in the world of divorce law, a theme we saw most recently (and handled better) in last year's *Intolerable Cruelty*. *Laws* lacks *Cruelty*'s teeth and taste for meat, preferring instead to lean on likable rumpledness and silliness. Julianne Moore is, as always, great. She has such an adult, responsible look about her—beautiful but not girlish—yet she punches away from expectations with roles like the pornstar/mom figure in *Boogie Nights* or the screaming-for-my-pills wife in *Magnolia*. In *Laws of Attraction* she's Audrey Miller, a sharp, solid, by-the-book legal hotshot—or at least that's what we're told he is, and certainly Pierce is always right in there talking her up. As far as we can tell, she's a nervous goofy flake, fending off pre-trial panic attacks by gobbling donuts in the can and forgetting to wipe her mouth, tripping over things and losing her panties and generally taking the whole movie to figure out that she's in love with Pierce Brosnan.

For his part, Brosnan rumples his suave nicely, ambling through the movie with a roguish just-woke-up look and easy confidence. Maybe a little too easy; it's fairly obvious early on that he's always three steps ahead of her on everything, which tends to cut down on the give-and-take of good romance. "There's no psychoanalytical shortcut into my pants!" she feistily insists while gulping down the drinks that Brosnan has easily identified as the correct shortcut into her pants; later on, she can't get a car and ends up dragging her luggage down the Irish road as Brosnan inevitably zooms up from behind to offer her a ride. In this context the cutesy plot twist—after a night of Irish revelry, they accidentally end up married—fits right in as Brosnan, who knows he loves her, patiently waits out her confused skittish qualms. Now we're married; you wanna pretend you don't like it? Go right ahead; I'll be right over here being your awesome husband. Eventually you'll figure it out.

IT'S PRETTY LOOSE, *Laws of Attraction*, with some rather stranded plot contrivances such as super-able divorce lawyers never bothering to check up



Julianne Moore and Pierce Brosnan in *Laws of Attraction*

on the most basic elements of their supposed drunken marriage. Certainly the film never shies away from overusing montages to shortcut actual plot points, skipping several. *Laws of Attraction* doesn't work too hard, and as I say, it's not exactly crammed with jokes. In romantic comedies you usually look to

fade into the background as a spoiled fashion-designer/rockstar couple whose divorce provides the arena for Brosnan and Moore's hijinks.

Brosnan is confident, Moore is flustered, and eventually they learn to love each other. Not bad, though if you're interested in seeing divorce lawyers tearing through love and marriage with real gusto and wit, you're better off grabbing *Intolerable Cruelty* on DVD, and if you're just looking for a date movie with nice romantic "aw" moments, you're actually way better off with *Hellboy*. ☹

LAWS OF ATTRACTION

Directed by Peter Howitt • Written by Aline Brosh McKenna and Robert Harling • Starring Julianne Moore and Pierce Brosnan • Opens Fri, Apr 30



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Private secretaries

Two women sleep their way to the top of the corporate ladder in *Secret Things*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Back in 1933, just before the dawn of the Production Code era, Barbara Stanwyck made a great, racy movie called *Baby Face* in which she played a barmaid who uses her sexual wiles to climb her way to the top floor of the office building located above the basement speakeasy where she started out. Writer/director Jean-Claude Brisseau's *Secret Things* could be read as sort of an arty remake of *Baby Face*—he has two heroines instead of one, he fills the film with a lot more explicit sex and he coats the whole thing with a sheen of cynical French intellectualism, but *Secret Things* is still a dirty old Barbara Stanwyck film at heart.

We begin in a strip bar where Nathalie (Coralie Revel, a brunette bad girl who's like a Parisian version of Alannah Myles) is a performer and Sandrine (blonde-haired Sabrina Seyvecou) tends bar. When they both

get fired on the very same night, Nathalie proposes that Sandrine move into her apartment. It's more than an act of charity; although both women insist that they're not lesbians, Nathalie nevertheless adopts Sandrine as a kind of sexual pupil. She brings out Sandrine's exhibitionist side, urging her to masturbate in front of her and to take off her underwear as they sit in a crowded subway station. Pleased with Sandrine's progress, soon Nathalie decides it's time for the two of them to go after bigger game: they both land secretarial jobs in a huge French corporation, intent on bed-

REVUE FOREIGN

ding the men who will help them get further ahead in the shortest amount of time. And sure enough, Sandrine quickly catches the eye of Delacroix (Roger Mirmont), a middle-aged office drone who falls hard for her newly honed powers of seduction. To quote Barbara Stanwyck in *Baby Face*, soon Sandrine is working so hard, she has to go to bed early every night.

But Nathalie's real target is Christophe (Fabrice Deville), the handsome but sadistic son of the corporation's dying CEO and the man to whom control of the compa-



Sabrina Seyvecou and Coralie Revel in *Secret Things*

ny will likely fall once his father is out of the picture—and it's with the introduction of Christophe into the equation that Brisseau really starts testing the extent to which his audience is willing to play along with him. Up until this point in the film, *Secret Things* has simply been an intriguing, naughty little erotic thriller. The scenes where Nathalie keeps daring Sandrine to push the boundaries of her own sexuality are playful but genuinely arousing—and the fact that we don't really know Nathalie's true motives gives them a satisfying undercurrent of danger and mystery.

BUT THE CHARACTER of Christophe takes the film into a bizarre new fantasy dimension: Brisseau has conceived of this fellow as a Sadean sexual tyrant with a creepy, inappropriately intimate relationship with his sexy sister, a guy who has treated his previous lovers so cruelly that one of them showed up at company headquarters, doused herself with gasoline and set herself on fire right

there in the lobby. And then, a few months later, it happened again! The plot gets more and more fantastic the more we see of Christophe, who I suppose is meant to symbolize the black, amoral heart of the corporate world, and by the end of the film, as we watch a panicky Sandrine (who has agreed to marry Christophe) runs around Christophe's mansion where he's presiding over an *Eyes Wide Shut* orgy, the script goes right off the rails.

Except that's not a really fair description—far from going "off the rails," Brisseau obviously meant his film to end this way all along. In a strange way, *Secret Things'* worldview is deeply moral. Nathalie keeps warning Sandrine that the worst thing that can happen to a seductress is to fall in love with her prey, but Brisseau sets up Christophe's mansion as a nightmare vision of a world that's completely absent of love. In other words, without love there's nothing but cruelty and degradation. (Nathalie, meanwhile, breaks her own rule and falls in love several times—and she's the only

character whose story ends happily.

Secret Things is more interesting to think about than to watch. Brisseau's low budget especially hurts him—the office scenes (and the orgy scenes) could have used the steely photographic glamour that Olivier Assayas brings to *Demonlover*, the other French tale of sex, sadism and big business that Metro Cinema is screening this weekend. And unlike the unforgettably brutal ending to Assayas's film, Brisseau's climactic scenes of sexual horror seem silly and campy instead of shocking. But taken together, these two films do tempt me to apply for an office position somewhere in France; here in Canada, the only sexual thing about my workplace are the 200 Viagra ads I get in my e-mail every morning. **B**

SECRET THINGS

Written and directed by Jean-Claude Brisseau • Starring Sabrina Seyvecou, Coralie Revel, Roger Mirmont and Fabrice Deville • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, Apr 30-May 3 (9:30pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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Little orphan animé

Innovative artwork
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Godfathers' mushy,
clichéd story

BY JOSEF BRAUN

It's Christmastime in Tokyo and while lining up for a free meal after watching a nativity play, Hana, a middle-aged homeless man wearing a turban, announces how much he would like to feel like a mother, to care for a child as a woman does. People laugh at him, dismissing him as a silly "faggot." Yet only moments later, he and his hobnob companions, the grizzled Gin and teenage runaway Miyuko, discover a newborn baby girl abandoned in the street and, amazed at the astonishing manner in which fate has answered Hana's spoken desires, take her into their care, calling her Koyoko.

Writer/director Shatoshi Kon merrily describes *Tokyo Godfathers* as being "full of miracles," and he ain't kidding: I'd say the miracle rate in *Tokyo Godfathers* averages about one every five minutes. You might imagine being a homeless person during a damp, snowy winter in one of the

world's largest cities could be, well, sort of miserable, but in the case of Hana, Gin and Miyuki, good things just can't stop happening. Hana says about 20 times or so how people need to be with their families, and *Tokyo Godfather* shows us such an epidemic of purely accidental reunions of estranged families, you'd think Tokyo had a population of 12 instead of 12 million. You can't turn around without bumping into the loved ones you left years ago. Hana has to be taken to a hospital at one point and who should turn out to be his nurse but Gin's long-lost daughter! Turns



out she's about to be married too—to none other than the nice doctor who just treated Hana! Wow.

Kon wanted to make an anime that wasn't just about cute girls, robots and explosions, to prove that anime could be about anything you can imagine, and indeed, when you take a look around at the sameness of a lot of Japanese animated films (particularly the ones full of sexual violence, such as Kon's *Perfect Blue*) there's something genuinely refreshing about *Tokyo Godfathers'* ragtag team of hobos, or the drag queens

who at one point take them in for a little holiday TLC. (The drag queens are old friends of Hana, who used to do drag himself before a falling-out thrust him into his life on the streets.) The film also has some of the most beautiful backdrops I've ever seen in an anime, meticulously detailed urban settings in soft, shadowy tones that slide past at different rates to evoke a sense of movement and immensity.

BUT REALLY, in no other way could you call *Tokyo Godfathers* innovative in the slightest. Once you get past the novelty of the effeminate gay protagonist and his wacky friends, the plot more closely resembles a "very special" holiday episode of a standard sitcom than anything else (even though it's actually a contemporary spin on John Ford's mushy 1948 western *Three Godfathers*). It's absurd to call Kon's use of homeless heroes daring when the film gives us no real sense of what their lifestyle is really about. And as is usually the case with anime, the characters seem almost constantly to be either screaming or crying like a bad clown act. Hana in particular gets into so many manic, queeny tizzles, you almost wish that Kon decided against walking on the wild side and



plunging his quill into gay subculture, given the clichéd mannerism he employs over and over. (If you happened to see *Markova: Comfort Gay* at the Metro last year, Hana's level of hysteria is comparable to Dolphy's nearly unbearable performance as Markova.)

Tokyo Godfathers never played Edmonton theatrically, but it has been on DVD for a couple of weeks now. The disc is accompanied by a 22-minute "making of" doc that, in an odd, ridiculous sort of way, I actually found more amusing than the film itself. A perky narrator repeats the title of the film in a singsongy voice about 80 times and keeps asking questions like "What

sort of movie is this?" In response, the lead actors just describe their characters and relay plenty of other redundant information. An incessant videogame music soundtrack plays over every moment, even the interviews with Kon and his animators. But I liked the way Yoshiaki Umegaki, the actor who plays Gin, says, "I want a lot of people to see this movie because it is cheerful and energizing!" ●

TOKYO GODEATHERS

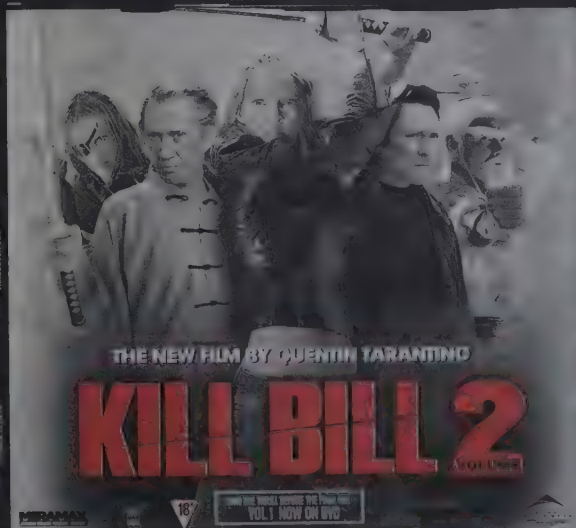
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CHECK THEATRE DIRECTORY FOR SHOWTIMES

NEW THIS WEEK

Demonlover (M) Connie Nielsen, Chloe Sevigny and Cina Gershon star in *Irma Vep* writer/director Olivier Assayas's arty thriller about a corporate spy who becomes entangled in a web of sex, torture and espionage during her conglomerate's negotiations with the inventors of a revolutionary piece of pornographic software. In French with English subtitles. *The Citadel*; Fri-Mon, Apr 30-May 3 (7pm)

Envy (CO, FP, L) Jack Black, Ben Stiller, Rachel Weisz and Amy Poehler star in *Wag the Dog* director Barry Levinson's comedy about a pair of lifelong buddies whose friendship becomes increasingly strained when one of them becomes incredibly wealthy after inventing a device that vaporizes dog feces

Godsend (CO, FP) Greg Kinnear, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos, Robert De Niro and Cameron Bright star in *The Hole* director Nick Hamm's occult thriller about a couple who unwittingly hire a mysterious scientist to use an experimental cloning procedure to bring their dead son back to life.

Goodbye, Lenin! (CO) Daniel Brühl, Kathrin Sass and Maria Simon star in director Wolfgang Becker's comedy about a young German man whose staunchly Communist mother awakens from a lengthy coma, and, fearing that the shock of hearing the truth will kill her, goes to ridiculous lengths to keep her from finding out that the Iron Curtain has fallen. In German with English subtitles

Laws of Attraction (CO, FP) Pierce Brosnan, Julianne Moore, Frances Fisher and Parker Posey star in *Sliding Doors* director Peter Howitt's romantic comedy about a husband-and-wife pair of divorce attorneys struggling to keep their own marriage together while terminating those of their clients.

Main Hoon Na (CO) Shahrukh Khan, Zayed Khan, Amrita Rao and Naseemuddin Shah star in director Farah Khan's Bollywood musical about a major who must pose as a university student in order to protect the life of an officer's daughter and to fulfill the dying wish of his martyred father. In Hindi

Mean Girls (CO, FP, L) Lindsay Lohan, Lacey Chabert, Rachel McAdams and Tina Fey (who also wrote the script) star in *Mean Girls* director Mark S. Waters's teen comedy about a high school transfer student who finds herself at war with a ruthless clique of snobby, popular girls

Monkey Business (FS) Cary Grant, Ginger Rogers and Marilyn Monroe star in *His Girl Friday* director Howard Hawks's 1932 screwball comedy about a stratified cherist who accidentally invents a formula that causes anyone who drinks it to revert to adolescence. *Provincial Museum Auditorium* (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, May 3 (8pm)

The Morrison Project (P) Josh Dean, Kevin Gillese, Bill Minsky and Jana O'Connor star in director Riley Beach's locally produced comedy, a collection of offbeat, often surreal tales from the mind of "the world's greatest grand

pa," Earnest Ol' Pete.

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (M) Directors Kim Bartley and Donnacha O'Brian's sensational fly-on-the-wall documentary depicting the attempted overthrow of Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and how his opponents' manipulation of the media nearly enabled the coup to succeed. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel*; Thu, Apr 29 (7pm)

Secret Things (M) Sabrina Seyvecou, Coralie Revel and Roger Mirmont star in *White Wedding* writer/director Jean-Claude Brisseau's provocative erotic drama about a pair of female roommates who use their sexual wiles to climb the ladder of a prosperous corporation. In French with English subtitles. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel*; Fri-Mon, Apr 30-May 3 (9:30pm)

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

The Alamo (CO) Dennis Quaid, Jason Patric and Billy Bob Thornton star in *The Alamo* director John Lee Hancock's historical epic about the famed 1836 siege in which a small cadre of less than 300 men made a doomed effort to defend a fort in San Antonio from the much larger Mexican army

Connie and Carla (CO) Nia Vardalos (who also wrote the script), Toni Collette and David Duchovny star in *The Santa Clause 2* director Michael Lembeck's gender-bending comedy about a pair of female dinner theatre singers who hide out after witnessing a Mafia hit by posing as drag queens.

The Corporation (P) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.

Doogville (CO) Nicole Kidman, Paul Bettany, Stellan Skarsgaard, James Caan, Patricia Clarkson, Lauren Bacall and Philip Baker Hall star in *Dancer in the Dark* writer/director Lars von Trier's Brechtian allegory about an idyllic American small town that agrees to shelter a beautiful female fugitive, but ends up self-righteously enslaving her instead

Ella Enchanted (CO, FP) Anne Hathaway, Hugh Dancy and Cary Elwes star in *Get Over It* director Tommy O'Haver's comic fantasy about a young woman's quest to lift the burdensome "gift of obedience" bestowed upon her by a well-meaning fairy. Based on the YA novel by Gail Carson Levine

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman

The Fog of War (P) *The Thin Blue Line* director Errol Morris's timely, Oscar-winning documentary, in which former U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert S. McNamara explains his controversial policies toward Cuba and Vietnam and offers his theories about modern warfare and foreign policy. Music by Philip Glass.

The Girl Next Door (CO, FP) Elisha Cuthbert, Emile Hirsch and Timothy Olyphant star in *The Animal* director Luke Greenfield's creepy romantic comedy about a high-school senior who falls in love with his gorgeous new next-door neighbour, only to learn that she's a former porn star.

Hellboy (CO, FP) Ron Perlman, Selma Blair and John Hurt star in *Blade II* director Guillermo del Toro's big-screen adaptation of the popular comic book about a demon who is adopted by U.S. agents and raised as a force for good after being brought into our dimension as a result of a mystical Nazi experiment gone awry.

Hidalgo (CO) Viggo Mortensen, Malcolm McDowell and Omar Sharif star in *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* director Joe Johnston's exotic equestrian epic, set in Saudi Arabia in 1890, about an American Pony Express courier who travels to the desert to take part in a lucrative but dangerous and grueling horse race.

Home on the Range (FP) The voices of Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Judi Dench, Steve Buscemi and Jennifer Tilly are featured in this animated Disney cartoon about a group of animals who band together to raise enough money to pay off the mortgage on the farm where they all live.

Kill Bill, Vol. 2 (CO, FP) Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Michael Madsen and Daryl Hannah star in the conclusion of writer/director Quentin Tarantino's genre-hopping exploitation epic, in which a former assassin relentlessly tracks down the man who employed her, impregnated her, shot her and left her for dead.

The Ladykillers (CO) Tom Hanks, Marlon Wayans, Irma P. Hall and J.K. Simmons star in *Raising Arizona* writer/directors Joel and Ethan Coen's remake of the classic 1955 comedy, about an eccentric criminal mastermind whose plan to rob a New Orleans riverboat is complicated by his meddling landlady, whose conveniently located basement is integral to his scheme.

Man on Fire (CO, FP, L) Denzel Washington, Dakota Fanning and Christopher Walken star in *Top Gun* director Tony Scott's glossy revenge flick about a former U.S. Marine who takes a job as a bodyguard for the daughter of a wealthy family in Mexico City that has been targeted by a gang of kidnappers.

NASCAR 3D: The IMAX Experience (FP) Kiefer Sutherland and Jeff Gordon are featured in *Free Willy* director Simon Wincer's jumboscreen documentary about the history of the NASCAR racing circuit and the cutting-edge technology that the sport's top drivers rely on to win competitions



With yet new comedies opening this Friday—*Envy* and *Mean Girls*—Amy Poehler is in the spotlight this week at the nation's cineplexes. Well, maybe not in the spotlight (Jack Black, Ben Stiller and Lindsay Lohan are the ones with their names above the title), but certainly dancing around entertainingly at the side of the stage in a couple of juicy supporting roles. In the long-delayed *Envy*, she's Jack Black's tacky *nouveau riche* wife, and in *Mean Girls* (written by her *Saturday Night Live* co-star Tina Fey), she's the tacky mother of the meanest girl at Chicago's North Shore High School. The mother? Man, it seems like just yesterday when Poehler was playing a teen herself on *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*—you may remember her as Andy Richter's bracefaced kid sister Stacy.

The Passion of the Christ (CO) Jim Caviezel and Monica Bellucci star in *Brazeheart* director Mel Gibson's ultra-controversial, blood-soaked Biblical epic depicting the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In Latin and Aramaic with English subtitles.

The Prince and the Pauper (FP) Julia Stiles, Luke Mably and Miranda Richardson star in *Rambling Rose* director Martha Coolidge's romantic comedy about a Wisconsin university student who falls in love with one of her classmates, not realizing he's actually a Danish prince posing as a commoner.

The Punisher (CO, FP) Thomas Jane and John Travolta star in writer/director Jonathan Hensleigh's film adaptation of the popular Marvel comic book about a former FBI agent who reinvents himself as a ruthless crime-fighting vigilante when an evil crime syndicate kills his family.

Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (CO, FP) Matthew Lillard, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Linda Cardellini and Freddie Prinze Jr. star in director Raja Gosnell's sequel to his 2002 hit, in which the Mystery, Inc. detective agency battles an evil scientist who has developed a machine that recreates the greatest foes from their past cases.

Starsky and Hutch (CO, FP) Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Snooki star in *Old School* director Todd Phillips's irreverent film version of the 1970s TV cop show about a pair of mismatched policemen who fight crime with the aid of their souped-up Ford Torino and their omniscient street informer Huggy Bear.

13 Going on 30 (CO, FP, L) Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo, Kathy Baker and Judy Greer star in *Tadpole* director Gary Winick's comic fantasy about a gawky 13-year-old girl who wakes

up one morning as her gorgeous, successful 30-year-old self as a result of a magical wish.

Touching the Void (GA) Joe Simpson, Simon Yates, Nicholas Aaron and Brendan Mackey star in *One Day in September* director Kevin Macdonald's documentary about Yates's astonishing, harrowing struggle to survive a disastrous mountaineering expedition in the Peruvian Andes. Based on the book by Joe Simpson.

Walking Tall (CO, FP) The Rock, Johnny Knoxville and Neal McDonough star in *All About the Benjamins* director Kevin Bray's modernized re-imagining of the 1973 drive-in classic, in which an ex-member of the U.S. Army Special Forces makes it his mission to clean up his small hometown after a corrupt casino owner turns it into a drug-riddled cesspool.

The Whole Ten Yards (CO, FP) Bruce Willis, Matthew Perry, Natasha Henstridge, Amanda Peet and Kevin Pollak star in *Grumpier Old Men* director Howard Deutch's sequel to the 2000 comedy *The Whole Nine Yards*, in which domesticated hitman Jimmy the Tulip must come out of retirement to aid timid dentist Nicholas Ozeransky when his wife is kidnapped by the Hungarian mob.

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Walk this way

Visiting galleries and counting calories at the 124th Street Gallery Walk

By DARREN ZENKO

They call it Browntown, sometimes, and it sure earned the name last Saturday. The previous night's howling, eye-scouring gristmill sandblasted wave after wave of dusty grime upon River City's features and fixtures, shitbox minivans and decorative light-poles alike. Some oldsters were reminded of the Depression, some youngsters were reminded of their small-d depression, and nobody went out without protective gear. By the time we hit 124 Street and picked up our passports for the area art galleries' seasonal open house, all that precious topsoil had long since precipitated out to coat the town, but the foul wind still whined in mocking echo of the farmers and ranchers who are *royally fucked* if we don't get real rain, real quick. Everybody from Foremost to Fairview is craving refreshment.

So, it was nice to see the **Scott Gallery** offering browsers their trademark sparkling beverage: soda water with just a delicate hint of Minute Maid Berry Punch. At first glance you might think it's Crystal Light, but the first sip's lack of the poisonous telltale reek of aspartame sets you straight. It doesn't exactly "go" with the cookies and triangular treats on offer, but its lightness and inoffensiveness is a pretty good fit with the harmless landscapes of Wendy Wacko, who made her name—which I won't make fun of, not here—selling canvases to German and Japanese

tourists in our lovely mountain parks. Phyllis Anderson's bright-but-boring travelogues and floral arrangements, on the other hand, would have been much better served by a nice suburban spinach dip, bread-bowl and all.

Next door at the **Bearclaw Gallery**, we make a bare-minimum pretense of art-looking as we beeline to the snack table. When I say "bare minimum," I mean we turned our heads to the left for about two seconds, because the refreshments were directly opposite the door. This is horrible *feng shui*, a geomantic arrangement designed to pour energy out onto the arid street, which may explain why the coffee was so cold and the limp little strawberries drifting in the party punch looked so very sad. A weak tray of factory cookies manages to provide me a rock-hard Dad's Coconut Oatmeal biscuit to munch while I check out Aaron Paquette's paintings, whose freshness—literally; some still had *wet paint*—counterpointed the tired coffee. This guy's work is really appealing, just barely skirting (in a good way) the frontiers of gimmickry in its combination of Native motifs and Pop Art style. Snobs might flick shit at the unpretentious little artist's statements accompanying most of the works, but... fuck 'em. I pour a little Irish into my lukewarm Nabob, in order to "prime" a little for our much-anticipated next stop—last year, the **Front Gallery** offered wine!

EXCEPT THIS YEAR they didn't. And not only did they not have wine, they didn't have *anything* outside of a fish-bowl filled with lollipops—and somebody else got the last of the chalky ones shaped like watertowers. So I guess I don't have much to say about the Front, except to send out a little note to Kari Duke: I *really* dig your



The Bearclaw Gallery serves up paintings by Aaron Paquette...



...and stale oatmeal cookies!

alleyway paintings; show in a gallery that knows (or, in this case, *remembers*) how to treat a thirsty art-walker and we'll talk coverage. Also, talk to whoever calls the shots at Front and tell them that if they want to hang mobiles they should move to a higher-ceilinged space; I got my hair caught in that soda-straw and parachute-cloth confection on the way out the door, and it kinda pissed me off.

REVIEW VISUAL ARTS

Last fall, I overheard two fun conversations at the **Agnes Bugera Gallery**. One was so stereotypical, I looked around for cameras to see if someone was making a *Kentucky Fried Movie*-style parody film: "I like it, but... will it clash with the couch?" the other was a guy telling his... girlfriend? Wife? "Partner"? They were both wearing standard-issue black "fashion leather," anyhow... that a certain landscape (of course it was a landscape) "really brought out the red in [her] hair." The Bugera is Sofapainting Central, and this season they feature the watercolours (because oils are just too *forceful* for today's interiors) of Jerry Heine, along with the punch-coffee-storebought trifecta. The coffee was tepid, the punch only a few degrees cooler and the Heines... well, I don't

remember. I can only go by my notes, which are unprintably dismissive. The Bugera also features a dude who did a Nickelback album cover.

BY THIS POINT, I'm severely lacking in all the key art-gallery food groups: the Cheese group, the Dip group and the critical Wine group. I'm fantasizing about a bizarre dream spread, my vitamin deficiencies creating strange cravings. In my head, compelling work from a diverse group of exciting iconoclasts backdrops a table groaning under the weight of pickled carrots, *nalyshnyki*, guacamole, Carlo Rossi screw-top "California Red"... and bottles of blueberry Yop for drivers and non-drinkers. Maybe the **West End Gallery** can gimme a fix.

But it looks like it's gonna be punch 'n' cookies for the art crowd, again. Except... the punch is colder, way colder, and tangy cranberry. The coffee is hotter than hell, and strong. The cookies are store-bought but they have the kind with the pink icing, and the table-arrangers have taken the time to transfer the biscuits from their plastic Costco tray to a very nice glass plate. This is all in the back room, where you can sip and munch and enjoy, among other fine works, Julie Phan's lovely glass pieces and Paul Jergensen's weirdly expressionist (and utterly entertaining) townscapes. In fact, why leave the

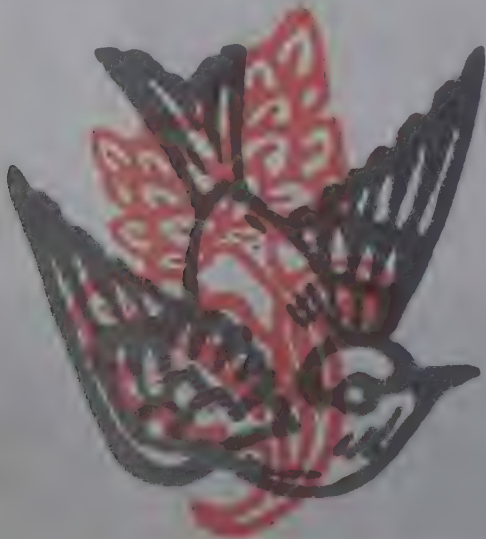
back room? All that's up front is blowhard Neal Patterson—ASA, SFCA, OPA, "elected to the prestigious group of intellectuals known as the Salmagundi Club of New York (1871)"—and his boringly brilliant landscapes, and the comparatively inept mutant zombie cartoon children of Guylene Saucier. You're not missing anything if you hang back by the punchbowl.

IT'S A LONG TRUDGE back up to the **Udell Gallery**, but it's worth it—the high-end picture merchant knows how to set a refreshment table. And there they are, the colours that never run: red, white and sparkling pink. David Thauberger's razor-sharp architectural elevations, the featured canvases (and boards), leave me cold, but there is high artistic irony in the fact that the one gallery that put wine on the counter put grocery-store "drink crystals" in the (very nice) punch-pitcher. How *deliciously* transgressive! Also, Doug "E" Udell knows we like the ol' Tabasco—a stop here more than meets the recommended daily allowance for the "Naked Lady" group, which I somehow forgot to mention earlier.

Didn't really get a chance to check out what **Electricum** had on offer, but I know from experience those folks have a kind of "good taste/bad refreshments" thing going on. I buy wedding and Christmas presents there, but I don't expect them to sacrifice any of their precious space to feed and water me. My memories of that building are enough: my Mom would drop us off and my brother would go to the Inside Edge skate shop while I went drooling two doors down to Softwarehouse. Good times.

Wind's blowing, skin's chapping, town's brown and four plastic cups of Udell's free wine are doing their melancholy best to make me mopey—a nice little Edmontown scene, no? I take a chatty cabride ("Fuckin' fertilizer? I never used that shit on my grass! It *addicts the roots!*") north to my aunt and uncle's 50th anniversary party, with all the afternoon's forgettable blar sliding from memory. The refreshment table disappointments are mitigated by the knowledge that in a rented hall, a turkey dinner complete with cabbage rolls is waiting. And the disappointments on the gallery walls, well... In a city where every second person you shake hands (or make out) with is an artist, they don't really matter at all.

Besides, there's always next season. ●



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Life goes to a party

Shadow Theatre serves up martinis and middle-aged heartbreak in *Later Life*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

AR. Gurney's *Later Life* begins with its hero, a straitlaced banker named Austin (David Ley), falling into conversation at a party with a retired philosophy professor named Jim (John Sproule), who's trying, without much success, to quit smoking. In fact, you get the feeling that Jim isn't hooked on nicotine so much as he is on delivering long, rueful soliloquies about the appeal of a fresh cigarette and the agony of living in a world that frowns so disapprovingly upon his favourite habit. The scene ends with Jim explaining to Austin why deciding to quit is such a momentous occasion: "All decisions are, at our age!" he says. "Younger people can change their minds, change their lives. That's fine, they have a lifetime ahead of them to change again. But for us who have had a whiff of the grave—it all boils down to *our last chance*." At that moment, a woman named Ruth (Michele Brown) walks onstage, and although Austin doesn't realize it until much too late in the game, she's *his* last chance.

It turns out that Austin and Ruth met each other years before, during the Second World War: he was a naval officer on leave on the Isle of Capri, and she was touring Italy with a bunch of her sorority sisters. They hit it off immediately, but after spending the day together, Austin, too wrapped up in his own youthfully gloomy neuroses to recognize a good thing when he saw it,

declined Ruth's offer to come up to her room. Now, many years later, the same spark exists between them—if anything, the passage of time has made their intimacy even easier, as Austin and Ruth find themselves revealing private secrets to each other that they've probably never told anybody else.

Gurney is sympathetic but surprisingly tough-minded in his handling of Austin. Without portraying him as a humourless middle-aged fuddy-duddy, Gurney shows how Austin's old-fashioned Boston manners are a sign of a deeper, paralyzing fear of risk, of leaping into life. There's a quiet brutality in the way Gurney has Ruth look at Austin late in the play and realize that this man,

who pulls out her chair for her, who listens to her with such sympathy,

who makes such wry, witty jokes about their fellow guests, who she always describes as so "good" and "thoughtful," just isn't someone she can fall in love with. Ley gives a subdued performance that downplays the pathos of Austin's situation, but he's perfectly in tune with Austin's reserved manner, the way he hides his social discomfort under a mask of gentlemanly civility. And he does a wonderful job with the scene where Austin stammers out a reluctant admission that he's just gone through a painful divorce. Brown, meanwhile, is totally believable as Ruth, a well-educated, urbane woman who nevertheless likes her sex life to have a healthy amount of lowdown disorder to it. (Austin promises to lend Ruth a pair of "decent pyjamas" if she comes home with him that night, and the politely disappointed way Brown repeats the phrase "decent pyjamas" is the only clue you need to predict whether she'll accept his offer.)

SEE NEXT PAGE

COMING SOON

3.2.1

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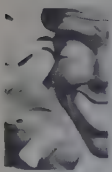
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theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Oscar campaign

There are two kinds of people in this world: Rodgers and Hart people and Rodgers and Hammerstein people. Rodgers and Hammerstein people are, broadly speaking, optimists. Or at least they like to hear optimistic messages, simple truths, clear lessons. They believe in community; they feel at home in the chorus; they believe they'll never walk alone. Rodgers and Hart people are, broadly speaking, cynics and pessimists. Or at least they find themselves responding more to unhappy endings, messages of doubt, witty insults, stories about anti-heroes. They think happiness is fleeting. They're loners who are glad to be unhappy but wish they were in love again. Rodgers and Hart are cool; Rodgers and Hammerstein are not. The classic Rodgers and Hart singer is Frank Sinatra; the classic Rodgers and Hammerstein singer is Gordon MacRae.

The fact that no fewer than three different Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals are being staged in Edmonton this month—*South Pacific* by Edmonton Opera, *Carousel* by Mayfield Dinner Theatre and *The Sound of Music* this week at the Citadel—puts a Rodgers and Hart guy like myself in a difficult position. The newspapers are full of Rodgers and Hammerstein tributes and even *Oh Susanna!* staged a special salute to R&H a couple of weeks ago. But while I've always enjoyed Broadway shows, I've never been able to get the appeal of Rodgers and Hammerstein's bloated, sexless brand of musical theatre. Sure, I can appreciate the fact that their show *Oklahoma!* ushered in a new era of

Broadway musicals where the songs advanced the plot and revealed new shadings of the characters singing them. And I guess I can respect them for the way shows like *The King and I* and *South Pacific* paved the way for musicals to explore subjects more serious than backstage romances and settings more exotic than New York City. And let me tell you, *Carousel* is a pretty terrific show.

But for such a supposedly revolutionary creative team, why do most of their shows seem so safe and comball only 50 years later? I think that Oscar Hammerstein's singular brand of optimism is the main culprit. As Stephen Schiff once wrote in the *New Yorker*, Hammerstein's shows "supported an optimistic, corny-as-Kansas worldview that chimed perfectly with the gung-ho mood of postwar America. But by the end of the '50s... a counterculture was forming, and its chief feature was doubt: a sense that all that Rodgers and Hammerstein cheeriness was somehow false, that the truth was double-edged, that American optimism was a form of repression, and that the family behind the white picket fence had something to hide."

That's why it's especially satisfying to hear juicy backstage stories about *The Sound of Music*—to know that Heather Menzies, who played Louisa in the movie, posed naked for *Playboy* when she grew up, or that Christopher Plummer actually hated the movie version and privately referred to it as *The Sound of Mucus*, or that when Ernest Lehman told his friend Bud Lancaster he was working on the *Sound of Music* screenplay, Lancaster remarked, "Jesus, you must really need the money." Something about *The Sound of Music*, which represents Rodgers and Hammerstein at their most populist, particularly seems to drive a certain kind of critic crazy. Pauline Kael gave a lot of bad reviews in her life, but she seldom frothed at the mouth the way she did in her famous pan of the film version of *The Sound of Music*, the one that got her fired from *McCall's* magazine. "A world of operetta cheerfulness and calendar art," she wrote. "Wasn't there perhaps one little Von Trapp who didn't want to sing his head off, or who screamed that he

wouldn't act out little glockenspiel routines for Papa's party guests, or who got nervous and threw up if he had to get on a stage?... This is the world teachers used to pretend (and maybe still pretend?) was the real world. It's the world in which the governess conquers all. It's the big lie, the sugarcoated lie that people seem to want to eat."

The paradox, though, is that Hammerstein was, by all accounts, the precise opposite of a liar. "Oscar believed what he wrote," Stephen Sondheim once said. "Oscar was able to write about dreams and trees and grass and stars because he believed in them." (Significantly, Hammerstein was a croquet-playing family man while Lorenz Hart, Richard Rodgers's pre-Hammerstein songwriting partner, was a tiny, depressive alcoholic who endured a lifetime of rejection from women.) And the fact that Sondheim, a man famous for his downbeat, pessimistic, ultrasophisticated musicals that made him every Hammerstein-hater's favourite composer, was mentored throughout his youth by none other than Oscar Hammerstein himself adds another vexing wrinkle to the whole puzzle.

So how do you solve a problem like Maria? Are the legends of people who adore *The Sound of Music* misguided dupes, or do we Lorenz Hart-loving cynics who think it's nothing but a big old schmaltzfest need a lesson in tolerance drummed into our dear little ears? Should we try and respect Oscar Hammerstein's heartfelt beliefs even though we don't necessarily share them ourselves? Cultural critic Gertler Asmundarson would say we should: "What makes Oscar Hammerstein's work worthwhile," he writes, "is not that I believe in the things he wrote about. It's that he believed in them."

I'm not so sure. I think the true test I'll have to apply when I see *The Sound of Music* at the Citadel this weekend is whether it can make me believe Hammerstein's worldview as well. After all, I can only go by my own opinion. And if there's one lesson I've learned from Maria Von Trapp, it's that I've got to have confidence in me.

Kirkpatrick's hat trick

John Kirkpatrick, the new artistic director of the River City Shakespeare Festival, was upstaged this Monday as he launched his company's 16th season lineup in the luxurious Wedgwood Room at the Hotel Macdonald. But at least the person who upstaged him was Shakespeare himself—or at least RCSF artistic associate Julien Arnold, in wig, pointy beard and full gold-lamé Shakespeare drag. (Arnold gave reporters a rare glimpse of Shakespeare at work—who would have guessed that the immortal line "What a piece of work is man" is in fact a rewritten version of "What a piece of work is this dude I know?")

Kirkpatrick had three productions to announce. As usual, the RCSF will stage two shows on alternating nights in Hawrelak Park this summer (from June 24 to July 18): *Twelfth Night*, directed by Kirkpatrick and starring Daniela Vaskalic and Julien Arnold, will be performed on the even nights; and *The Merchant of Venice*, directed by Marianne Copithorne and starring John Wright as Shylock, will occupy the odd nights. The company will also be co-producing Veni Thiessen's new play, *Shakespeare's Will*, with the Citadel this February. (Geoffrey Brumlik will direct and Jan Alexandra Smith will star as Anne Hathaway.)

"I just love the misguided passion of *Twelfth Night*, I love Malvolio's tragic tale," Kirkpatrick says. "I've wanted to do it all along; it was part of my pitch when I interviewed for the job. And it has some of the same elements and a similar-sized cast as *Merchant of Venice*, which I knew a lot of the associates wanted to tackle. People often go on hearsay when it comes to that play, but in fact Shakespeare hasn't written Shylock as that evil, scrimping miser—this isn't *The Jew of Malta*. He's a fabulous character. And what many people also don't realize is that the play has a lot of great comedy in it—it's a bit of a wedding farce. It's a great play, and I figured, 'Let's give it a shot.'"

Further information about the shows (and handy performance-night weather forecasts!) can be found at the festival's new website, www.rivercityshakespeare.com.

Continued from previous page

Later Life's big gimmick, however, is that the 10 other characters in the play—a bickering husband and wife, a beer-swilling lesbian chatterbox, a computer nerd, a timid video player fresh from an assertiveness workshop and many, many more—are all played by the same two actors, Davina Stewart and John Sproule. It's certainly a kick to see Stewart and Sproule cutting loose in such a goofy selection of costumes and wigs (as Ted McAlister, a tactless but good-hearted Southerner newly transplanted to Boston, Sproule sports an outrageous pompador that's worthy of the Leningrad Cowboys), but many of these characters are so cartoonish compared to Austin and Ruth that they seem to have wandered in from another play—perhaps some wacky farce being staged down the street. It's a bit distracting. There are important exceptions, though: Sproule does an expert drunk routine as Austin's friend Walt, and he gives Jim a very poignant final scene as he recalls his dead cat Clementine; and Stewart brings out a whole series of surprising layers in Sally the hostess with only a handful of brief dialogue exchanges.

With all the costume changes and the funny wigs, it's easy to miss how cunningly Gurney has woven the idea of people caught between their desire to change their lives and their need to cling to the past into almost every single vignette. Its virtues, like Austin's, are old-fashioned ones—wit, intelligence, taste—and yet Gurney also shares Ruth's awareness that wit, intelligence and taste, on their own, might not be enough. *Later Life* has more: it has humour, it has wisdom and it has John Sproule in a really ridiculous wig. ☉

LATER LIFE

Directed by John Hudson • Written by A.R. Gurney • Starring David Ley, Michele Brown, John Sproule and Davina Stewart • Varosca Theatre • To May 9 • 454-5564

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

INTERNATIONAL DANCE DAY (422-8107)
Presented by the Alberta Dance Alliance • Express Yourself: Break Out • Dance at Public Schools, Apr 29; 422-8107 • Cabaret des Jeunes: Wild Beast Cabaret, May 1 • Dances of Rupert's Land; Apr 29; 451-1072 • La Grandeole Dance School Annual show; Apr. 25 • Kaleidoscope 2004: Victoria School annual show; Apr. 29-May 1; 426-3010 • Cherenosh Western Cabaret Fundraiser, May 1-4; 466-0089

RODA DE CAPOEIRA The Capoeira Academy, 6807-104 St. (790-3500) • A free performance of a Brazilian mix of dance, martial arts and percussion • Every Sat. (2-3pm)

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

AGNES BUGERA GALLERY 12310 Jasper Ave. (482-2854) • NEAR AND FAR: Artworks by Jerry Heine • Until Apr. 29

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St. (488-6611/4808-5900) • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm (closed all hols) • MAKING MUSIC: Handmade musical instruments, until May 1 • **Discovery Gallery: IMAGE SERVICE**

THE TECHNIQUE Hot glass and metal artworks by Martha Henry, until May 16 • **A WOMAN'S PLACE**: Textiles by Sanna Kaiser, until May 16

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • OUR WAY OF SEEING THINGS: Watercolor paintings by Mel Heath, Frank Heath, Karen Findlay, until May 1

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Knoll Building, 10217-106 St. (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Peterson, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rodendo, Greg Swain, Anna Szil, Eugene Uhuad and guests

CHRISTEL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9621 Whyte Ave. (439-6335) • Open: Mon-Fri 11am-5pm, Sat, by appt • JANKA: Fabric art and copper enameling works by Jane Bergstrom • Apr. 30-May 14 • Opening reception: Sat, May 1 (12-5pm)

CITY HALL Sir Winston Churchill Sq • Artworks by the Edmonton Art Club • Until May 3

DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St. (488-4445) • Paintings by Natalia Husar • May 8-22 • Opening reception: Sat, May 8 (2-4pm)

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6283) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10-30am-5pm; Thu 10-30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • Ken Macklin: until June 6 • **HELD NOTES**: Artworks by the

O'Flanagan brothers; until June 6 • **ART FOR LUNCH**: SAC Theatre, Apr. 29 • **VISIT WITH ARTISTS**: Slide presentation by Sheila Luck, Apr. 29 (7pm) • **Kitchen Gallery: TIDAL TRACE**: A multimedia installation by Lyndal Osborne and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Children's Gallery: SPELLBOUND**: until Jan. 2005 • 38 (adult)/16 (student/senior), \$4 (children 6-12)/free (member/children 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd. (482-1402) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm • **THE DANCE**: Paints by Pamela Copeland; until May 1 • **NEW WORKS**: Paintings by Kate Mory; Apr. 4-29

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl, 8303-112 St • **MUCH UTLIFE**: Artworks by Pearl Westfall • May 3-12 • Opening reception, artist in attendance: Fri, Apr. 30 (7-8:30pm)

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **ALL DRESSED**: Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate show • Until May 8 • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 29 (7-10pm)

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave. (423-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm, Thu-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings, Inuks by G. Arluk, Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by M. Tallo • Through May

FRINGE GALLERY Bsm 10516 Whyte Ave. (432-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9-10am-6pm • **PRESERVE**: Photomontage works by Paul Freeman; until Apr. 30 • Paintings by Carol Wylie; through May

GALLERY DE JONGE 27022A Hwy 164, Spruce Grove (962-5905) • Open Tue-Sun 11-5pm, any time by appointment • Work by local artists Beth

Coulas, Earl Cummins, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St. (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **INCAR: NATION**: Photographs by Vancouver artist Susan Bozic; until May 1 • **AM I GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, SEX, FOOD?** Artworks by Shelley Rothernberger; May 6-June 12; opening reception: May 6 (7-10pm) • **FRONT ROOM: FROM THE INSIDE OUT**: Artworks by Tandi McLeod; until May 1 • **BORDERLINE**: Artworks by Kristine Callan; May 6-June 12

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave. (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • Watercolours by Joyce Bjerkle • Until May 6

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St. (465-6171) • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by Jim Akerman, Jim Brager, Glenda Beaver, Jack Ellis, Linda Nelson, George Toszack, George Werber, Lewter by Raymond Cox, bronzes by Gina McDougall-Cohoe • Through May

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St. (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9-10am-5:30pm, Sat 9-10am-6pm • Artworks by Andrew Reilman, Alk Roberto, prints by Tobi, Edmonton Sky Line prints by Loren Chabot, Photographs of Edmonton River Valley Area by John Johnson • Through May

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St. (423-5533) • **PROJEX ROOM: IN-BETWEEN**: Artworks by James Kwong • Until May 14

LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY 455 King/Street, Spruce Grove • 2004 ALBERTA COMMUNITY ARTS CLUB ZONE SHOW FOR CENTRAL ALBERTA. Paintings by artists ages 15-18 from central Alberta • May 7 (7-10pm), May 8, 11-14 (12-

5pm), May 15 (12-3pm) • Opening reception: Fri, May 7 (7-10pm)

MACEWAN CENTRE FOR THE ARTS Studios 109/113, 10045-156 St. (497-4322) • Fine Art Graduates exhibition presented by Grant MacEwan College • Until Apr. 29

MCNULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St. (407-7152) • **ALEGRIA**: Paintings and sculptures by Annette Ayer, Carol Hill, Pat Di Marcello, Ingrid Martel, Mary Topping, Jane Willoughby Scott and Mary Wright • Until June 20

MCPAG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • **PULSE-A NORTHERN ALBERTA DRAWING EXHIBITION** • Until May 4

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm • **SCIENCE ON THE MOVE**: May 1-June 27 • Open house: Sat, May 1 (1-4pm)

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Peron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm • **HIDDEN TALENTS IV**: Artworks by participants of St. Albert's Community Services art classes; until Apr. 30 • **HIGH ENERGY IX**: Artwork by St. Albert's High Schools; May 6-29 • Art walk, opening reception: May 6 (6-9pm)

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave. (453-9100) • Open: Sat 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-9pm • **THROUGH THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE**: Embroidery traditions and high craftsmanship of women from Gujarat, India; until June 6 • **IN THE SHADOW OF VOLCANOS**: Indonesian art-

works; until June 6 • **WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN?**

Featuring the legacy of the residential

schools, May 7-Aug. 2 • **BIG THINGS 3:**

Healing large-scale sculptures by the artists of

the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; May 8-

Mar. 29 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES**

Gallery: Spans 11,000 years and 500 genera-

tions, people of the past and present, record-

ing, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent

exhibit • **Spotlight Gallery: EVERY MOTHER'S****FEAR: ALBERTA'S POLIO EXPERIENCE**; until Sept. 12• **The Natural History Gallery** • **BUG ROOM:**Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE****BIRD GALLERY:** Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit• **TREASURES OF THE EARTH:** Geology collection.Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY:**Permanent exhibit • **TIME TRAVELLERS LECTURES**• **Carved in Stone—The Rise and Fall of the Great****Stone Statues of Easter Island** with Jack Brink; Apr.29 • **Following the Shadows of the Great****Over-Western Canada's Early Explorers**; with Dr.

Heinz Pyszczyk; May 6

• **RED STRAP ART MARKET** 10305-97 St. (497-

2211) • Open: Tue-Sun 11am-5pm • Artworks by

various artists and artisans

• **RIGOLETTO'S CAFÉ** 10068-108 St. • **AIDA TO****ZAZA:** Featuring artworks by various artists • Until

Apr. 30

• **ST. ALBERT'S ART WALK** Pymmalon School**Of Fine Art**, 44 St. Thomas Street • **The****Bookstore on Perren**, 7 Perren Street •**Modern Eyes Gallery**; 24 Perren Street •**Profiles**, 19 Perren Street • **Art Boat Gallery**,

26 St. Anne Street; Gempot 118 St. Anne Street

• May 6 (6-9pm) • Opening reception: May 6

(6-9pm)

• **SCOTT GALLERY** 10411-124 St. (488-3619) •Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **CANADIAN TRAVELS:**

Landscape and still life paintings by Phyllis

Anderson • Until May 4

• **SEEDY'S** 10314-104 St. • **CONNECT THE DOTS****TOUR:** Photographs by Toni Halkenscheid, Tim

Barber, Kamczek Stroz, Janieta Eyre, Chris

Gergely • Thu, Apr. 29 (9pm)

• **SNAP GALLERY** 10317-104 St. (423-1492) •Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **HOW TO BECOME A****MIRROR:** SNAP membership show • Until May 22• **SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM**, 8882-170 St. (444-

1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Greg

Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo

Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

• **STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY** Centre forReading and the Arts • **MILLENNIUM IN A BOX:**

Handmade books, a conceptual interpretation of

where the millennium is leading by Canadian

artists; until June 30 • **THE ART OF THE BOOK:** Ars

Libri speaks about the traditional craft of book-

binding; Sun, May 2 (2pm)

• **STUDIO GALLERY** 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St.

Albert (460-5990) • Open: Tue-Fri 10am-5pm,

Sat: 10am-4pm, or by appointment • **WESTERN SPACE.**

Artworks by Bruce Thompson, Doug Fraser and

Bruce Allen • Until Apr. 30

• **VAAA GALLERY** 3rd Flr, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St. (421-1731) • **CLAY CREATES CULTURE:**

Alberta Potters' Association juried Membership

Exhibition: Clay works by members of the Alberta

Potters' Association; until May 1 • **PLATINUM PER-****CEPTIONS:** Photographs by Allan King; May 6-June

12; opening reception: May 6 (7:30-9:30pm)

• **VANDERLEELE GALLERY** 10183-112 St. (452-0286) • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • **SWAN LAKE:**

Oil paintings by Emily Bickell; May 1-18

• **WILDWOOD GALLERY AND STUDIO** 5410-50

St., Wildwood, (780) 325-3904 • Open: Wed-Sun

11am-5pm, or by app • Metal, wood relief, and

clay sculptures by Pat Di Marcello and other artists

• Through May

• **THE WORKS GALLERY** Commerce Place, Main

Flr, 10150 Jasper Ave. (426-2122 ext. 226) •

Open: Mon-Fri 12-5pm • **THE WORKERS ART****SHOW:** • Apr. 28-May 8 • Opening reception: Fri,

Apr. 30 (7-9pm)

• **ZOCALO** 10826-95 St. (428-0754) • **EMERGENCE:****A BLOOMING ART SHOW:** Drawings by Jessica

Hiemstra-van der Horst • Until May 9

LITERARY

• **AUDREY'S BOOKS** 10702 Jasper Ave. (423-3487) •

Perilous of Elizabeth MacPherson's new novel

Perilous Departures • Fri, Apr. 30 (7:30pm)• **BACKROOM VODKA BAR** 201, 10324-82 Ave. •

Music jambo. A word circus presented by the

Raving Poets; every Tue (8pm) until August •

Poetic Justice Poetry slam competition presented

by the Raving Poets; 7pm (dor); Tue May 4 (7pm)

• **GREENWOODS' BOOKSHOPPE** 7925-104 St.

(433-2005) • Book launch for Marty Chan's new

young adult novel *The Mystery of the Frozen Brains*;Sat, May 1 (11:30am) • Featuring Carole Roy, *The**Raging Grannies*; Mon, May 3 (7:30pm)• **ANOTHER FIRST BREATH.** Like the earlier ver-

sion, it will be both unsettling and vivify-

ing, a time of poignancy and celebration.

• **GEMINI** May 21 - June 20

Years ago, rock star Sting bragged about the

extravagant tantric lovemaking that he and

his wife enjoyed. Their erotic sessions some-

times lasted for eight consecutive hours, he

said. But recently he confessed that his ear-

lier claims had been overstated. "What I did-

n't say about the eight-hour marathons," he

told British TV station ITV, "was that they

included four hours of bedding and then

dinner and a movie." I urge you to regard

Sting as your role model in the coming

year, Gemini. Spend some time making

good-humoured corrections of your past

hyperbole. While you're at it, atone for any

other extreme or immoderate behaviour

that may still be generating misconceptions.

• **CANCER** June 21 - July 22

Though he wrote almost five centuries ago,

comic novelist François Rabelais provided

the perfect advice for you this week: "It

behoves all adventures to treat their good

luck with reverence, neither bothing nor

upsetting it." In other words, Cancerian,

don't spend even a minute wondering why

your life is blessed with so much grace right

now. Refrain from analyzing it, discarding

about it or theorizing on how you might be

able to preserve it. Instead, use it exuber-

antly and with a devout sense of gratitude.

Explore in vivid detail what it feels like to be

a free-wheeling adventurer.

• **LEO** July 23 - Aug. 22

Now that you're in the ambition-building

phase of your yearly cycle, I figure you're

ready for a fresh set of cute aphorisms.

Use the following to fuel the fire in your

belly, the chutzpah in your heart and the

• **STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY** Centre forReading and the Arts (496-7086) • **Voices**

Unheard: Open mic event for teens to read their

stories, poetry, essays, or sing • Sat, May 8 (1-

2pm sign-up) • Free

• **WHITEMOUNT CROSSING LIBRARY THEATRE**4211-106 St. (420-1757) • **Say It With Story**

Presented by T.A.L.E.S. Edmonton • Stories told

in the oral tradition by local storytellers and are

chosen for adults or older children • May 13

(7pm) • \$10/\$25 (family pass) • Tickets available

at TIX on the Square

LIVE COMEDY

• **THE COMEDY FACTORY** 3414 Gateway

Boulevard (469-4999) • Roger Peltz; Apr. 29-May

1 • Rob Trick; May 6-8

• **FARGO'S** 10307-82 Ave. (433-4526) • Improv

comedy • Every Sun

• **LEGENDS PUB** 6104 172 St. (481-2786) •

Comedy Mondays With Yuk Yuks on Thurs

• **RED'S WEM** (481-6420) • Hypno Sundays •

9-30pm • Wayne Lee; May 2, May 5 • Free

THEATRE

• **CAROUSEL** Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield

Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave.

(483-4051) • Rodgers and Hammerstein's tear-

jerking musical adaptation of Ferenc Molnár's play

Lulu, about an irresistible carnival barker who is

allowed to return from the dead for one day and

try to repair the lives of the wife and teenage

daughter he left behind • Until July 4 • Tickets

available at Mayfield Dinner Theatre box office

• **CHIMPINOVI** Verscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave.

(468-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches

performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers

• Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

• **DIE-NASTY** Verscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave.

(468-0695) • Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark

Meer, Josh Dean, Devina Stewart and Leona

Brausen celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's

legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing

the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace

Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

• **ÉPINAL** Westbury Theatre, Arts Bams, 10330-84

Ave. (469-8400) • Presented by L'Unité/Théâtre

Robert Beaulieu and Robert Mariner (who also

wrote the script) co-direct this gritty, twist-filled

drama about an odious bartender who shows

his relentless questioning of the sole customer at his

bar

• **IRVING** Aug 23 - Sept. 22The influential *New York Times Book**Review* may soon begin to emphasize

nonfiction books and cut back on its cov-

erage of literary fiction. "The most com-

pelling ideas tend to be in the nonfiction

world," *Times* executive editor Bill Keller

said in an interview, launching the

rumours. Poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti

decided such a move, telling the *San Fran-**cisco Chronicle's* Heidi Benson that "the

national consciousness has [already] been

taken over by the technological and prag-

matic." He'd like to see more fiction and

poetry. Regardless of where you might

stand on this issue for the long haul,

Virgo, it's important to side with Fer-

linghetti for now. You need less knowl-

edge and more imagination, fewer of the

hard facts and more of the dreamy truths.

• **LIBRA** Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

U.S. President Woodrow Wilson suffered a

debilitating stroke in 1919. For the next

17 months, until his term was over, his

wife Edith was the de facto commander-

in-chief of the United States. She hid the

severity of his incapacity, allowing only his

doctors to see him as he hid in his sick-

room at the White House. Meanwhile, she

issued a steady stream of policy decisions

and signed treaties and presidential direc-

tives, always written in her own hand. I

believe you Libras now have a chance to

play a role comparable to Edith's: to be

the power behind the throne. Here are

seemly talent uncovers a lurid secret • Apr. 29-30

(6pm) • \$17 (adults)/\$12 (student) • Tickets avail-

able at L'Unité/Théâtre, Le Carrefour

• **AN EVENING OF ONE ACTS** Waterdale

Playhouse, 10322-83 Ave. (439-2845/420-1757) •

A collection of one-act plays about bumpy love

affairs and jealous boyfriends and girlfriends, fea-

turing Fran Chews by Mark Stubbings, *Double**Occupancy* by Blaine Newton and *Kreslinated* by

Michael Healey and Kate Lynch • May 3-8 (6pm)

• \$5 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

• **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO****TOO** Kaala Theatre, basement Jubilee

Auditorium (420-1757) • Presented by ELOPE

Musical Theatre • Stephen Sondheim's classic

musical about a clever, conniving slave whose

master promises to grant him his freedom if he

can arrange for the woman he loves to marry him

instead of the vain soldier his father has promised

her to • May 6-8 (7:30pm), May 9 (2pm), May

13, 15, 16 (7:30pm) • \$21.50 (adults)/\$16.50

(students/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the

Square

• **JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR** Horizon Stage (962-

8955) • Presented by the Horizon Players •

Richard Winnick directs Sam Holowaty, Taryn

Brown and Trevor Smith in *Jesus Christ Super-**star* • May 13-16 (7:30pm), May 17 (2pm)

• \$20 (adults)/\$15 (student/senior) • Tickets

available at Horizon Stage box office,

TicketMaster

• **LATER LIFE** Verscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave.

(468-0695) • Presented by Shadow

Theatre • John Hudson directs Michelle Brown,

David Ley, Devina Stewart and John Sproule in *The**Dining Room* playwright A.R. Gurney's rueful com-

edy/drama about a pessimistic middle-aged man

who strikes up a conversation with an old flame at

a party and begins wondering if rekindling their

romance is still a possibility • Until May 8, Tue

(8pm), 10, Wed (8pm), Sun (2pm)

• \$15/\$12 (student/senior), Fri-Sat (8pm) \$20/\$16

(student/senior); Sat (2pm): pay-what-you-can •

Tickets available at TIX on the Square

• **THE PIRATE GHOST OF CAPTAIN SMUG**

Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Oasis Entertainment

Hotel, 11303 Fort Rd. (448-9339) • The crew of

the pirate ship *Swampy* sets sail in search of buried

treasure in this swashbuckling adventure, packed

with music, swordfights and mermaids • Until

May 9, Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) •

Tickets range from \$34.95-\$49.95/\$20 (children

12 and under)

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vuc.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

BUDDHIST MEDITATION 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Lojong (mind training) tape series presented by the Karma Tshul Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society • Every Wed (7:30pm)

CARVED IN STONE: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GREAT STONE STATUES OF EASTERN ISLAND Provincial Museum Theatre (453-9100) • Lecture presented by Jack Brink • Thu, Apr. 29 (7pm) • \$8

EDMONTON CHINESE ORIENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION Londonderry Junior High School, 7104-144 Ave • Monthly meeting • May 4 (7pm)

FAIR TRADE CONCEPTS Ten thousand villages (439-8349) • Fair Trade Fair: Information, samples & Sat, May 8

PERFORMING THE SHADOWS OF THE GREAT EMERSON: WESTERN CANADA'S EARLY EXPLORERS Provincial Museum Theatre (453-9100) • Lecture presented by Dr. Heinz Pysarczyk • Thu, May 6 (7pm) • \$8

GREEN THUMB/GREEN PLANTING Stanley A. Milner Library, 7 St Winston Churchill Sq (439-1160) • Part of the Pesticide Free Lawns Campaign in Edmonton featuring author and activist Carole Rubin • Sat, May 1 (3-4:30pm) • Free

BARBARA TAYLOR LING: THE GREAT EMERSON MOUNTAIN SOCIETY 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Lojong (Mind Training) Tape series meeting every Wed (7:30pm)

LIVING WITH LOSS Central Lions Seniors Centre, 11113-113 St (454-1194) • Presentation on grieving and supporting those who grieve • Wed, May 5 (10am-noon) • Pre-register

MADE/WORKS LECTURE SERIES Grant MacEwan Conference Theatre, 5-142 (426-7122) • Presented by Walker McKinley • Thu, Apr. 29 (7pm)

NATURE CONSERVANCY Mountain Equipment Co-op, 12328-102 Ave (488-6414 ext. 231) • Slide show about local areas the Nature Conservancy is protecting • Mon, May 10 (7:30pm) • Free

PESTICIDES, POLITICS AND HEALTH Stanley A. Milner Library, 7 St Winston Churchill Sq (439-1160) • Presentation and discussion panel featuring Helen Jones • Sat, May 1 (1-2:30pm) • Free

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling Invention: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY: GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kushok Dhamchoe of Namgyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7:30pm): beginners • Every Wed (7:30pm) and Sun (11am-1pm): advanced

TIME TRAVELLERS XI Provincial Museum, 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Following the *Shadows of the Great Ones - Western Canada's Early Explorers* with Dr. Heinz Pysarczyk • May 6

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE TEA CEREMONY Ozawa Pavilion, authentic Japanese Tea House Kurimoto Japanese Garden, Devonian Botanic

Gardens (987-3054) • May 2 (1:30, 2:15, 3pm) • \$5

UPWARD BOUND TOASTMASTERS Baker Centre, 10th Fl, 10025-106 St (477-2613) • Every Wed (7pm): Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership skills

VISIT WITH ARTISTS Edmonton Art Gallery, Lecture Theatre, 2 St Winston Churchill Sq • Slide presentation by Sheila Luck presented by the Alberta Society of Artists • Thu, Apr. 29 (7pm)

WALKERMcKINLEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION (453-9100) • Door Recycle, 85 St, 85 Ave (434-2675) • Free guided hike, approx. 11 km at Coal Lake • May 2 (9am)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 117258 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys • Every Mon-Fri pool, DJ's Arrow Chaser, Jeffy Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbian/gay Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOG) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 702A, 10242-105 St (448-1768) • www.icarealberta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCCE Suite 45, 9912-106 St • Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT • A of Campus • Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a supportive environment (fall and winter terms). Contact Kris Wells (kwell@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Wonham ([www.ualberta.ca/~ciel/eds/AgapeVerdana.htm](mailto:mwonham@ualberta.ca) for info • <a href=)

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE Cameau United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/livpos (488-5768) • Edmontonians Living with HIV Society. Peer-facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves.edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

OUT IS IN (492-0767) • A youth arts project about GLBT issues, and addressing homophobia in schools and in the community • For more info www.ualberta.ca/~outin or outin@ualberta.ca

PLFAG GLCCCE Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gay/bisexuals/transgendered

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2271/877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thru 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • TUE: Hot Butt Contest (8pm-midnight) with DJ Janney • WED: Amateur strip with Weena Luu, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • THU: Rotating shows: Ladonna's review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • FRI: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outtafunk, DJ Jazzy and male stripper Downstairs: female stripper • SAT: Every Sat like new years: Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, new music with DJ Dan and Mike Downstairs: Retro music • SUN: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic: Show Beer Bait, every Wed and more • Apr. 29-May 9 • Stanley A. Milner Library: All We Worked For: 100 Years of Canadian Workers' History: Apr. 29-May 20, April 29, opening: 7-8:30pm • Tipton Park, 108 St, 81 Ave; May 1 (11:30am); to MacIntyre Park (noon); May Day March: Stormin' Chaos: Labour, Arts and Youth Street Jam, following the May Day March • Ukranian Hall, 11018 97 St: Notre Dame Des Bananes, Labour Choir, Faith Nolan; May 1 (7pm); 12:50 • Sacred Heart School, 9624-108 Ave; An Evening with Robert Clinton; May 6 (7pm) • Westmount Community League, 10970-127 St: Labour cabaret with Guy Smith; May 8 (7pm); \$10 (door)

TRANSSEXUAL TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP egret@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thru 1-12; Fri-Sat 1-3 • Gay night club. Every Sun-Tue (7-12am): karaoke with Tizzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCCE), 45, 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.youthtripod.com/yuy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • A facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION Provincial Museum of Alberta, 12845-102 Ave (403-283-2025) • Celebration including auctions, jazz music, snacks and cocktails • Thu, Apr. 29 (5:30pm) • \$60

BALL OF THE WILD-DISTRACTION CIDER Westin Hotel (455-7181) • Champagne reception, Greek dinner, traditional dances, live and silent auction, with dancing to follow, fundraiser for the Canadian Cancer Society • Sat, May 8 (6pm auction, 7pm dinner) • \$125 (\$25 tax receipt)

CHINESE CULTURE VARIETY SHOW Milner School for Performing Arts (424-8124) • Fundraiser for a Chinese library • May 9 (1pm) • \$50 (VIP/\$15 general)

COCKTAILS FOR CATTLE Cowboys, 10102-180 St (481-8739) • Fundraiser and benefit auction • Apr. 30 (6:30pm) • \$5

DISCOVER SPIRIT AND SOAK WITH THE OCEAN OF LIGHT ADULT AND CHILDREN'S CHORALE Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 St Winston Churchill Sq (420-1757) • May 4 (7-9 pm) • \$11 (adult)/\$8 (senior/student)/\$20 (family) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square, door

EXPERIENCE SOUTH EAST ASIA Convocation Hall, U of A Campus (953-6309) • May 7 (6pm) • \$10 (adv)/\$15 (door) • Tickets available at SUM info booth

FESTIVALISM! TransAlta Arts Barn (996-2750/497-4710) • Sat, May 1

GANG WU MARTIAL ARTS TOURNAMENT Edmonton Gamson Fitness Facility, CFB, Narmoo (421-7439) • Sat, May 1 (10am)

GREAT HUMAN RACE U of A Butterdome, www.greathumanrace.com • Walk or run sponsored by the United Way • Sat, May 8 • Pre-register

KITCHEN'S CELEBRATION SATURDAY NIGHT St. Vital's Senior Center, Beaumont (928-8558/986-1782) • A night of Celtic music and food • May 8 • \$15/\$12.50 (before May 1)

LICK THIS! Urban Lounge, 8103-105 St • Presented by Dreamscape Festival Society • Fundraiser featuring Darkhorse with Clay Rookes • May 6 (9pm) • \$7 (door)

MAYWEAK LABOUR ARTS FESTIVAL • www.mayweek.ab.ca • Activities including May Day March with Trim Can Steel Orchestra, Labour cabaret with Guy Smith, Labour arts and youth street jam and more • Apr. 29-May 9 • Stanley A. Milner Library: All We Worked For: 100 Years of Canadian Workers' History: Apr. 29-May 20, April 29, opening: 7-8:30pm • Tipton Park, 108 St, 81 Ave; May 1 (11:30am); to MacIntyre Park (noon); May Day March: Stormin' Chaos: Labour, Arts and Youth Street Jam, following the May Day March • Ukranian Hall, 11018 97 St: Notre Dame Des Bananes, Labour Choir, Faith Nolan; May 1 (7pm); 12:50 • Sacred Heart School, 9624-108 Ave; An Evening with Robert Clinton; May 6 (7pm) • Westmount Community League, 10970-127 St: Labour cabaret with Guy Smith; May 8 (7pm); \$10 (door)

NEW HOME IMMIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT CENTRE B-102, Lower Level, 10010-107A Ave (423-7869) • Benefit auction • Sat, May 1 (6-9pm)

RIVER VALLEY CLEAN UP Emily Murphy Park (439-1160) • Sun, May 2 (10am-2pm)

ROCK 'N' ROLL SHOW 'N' DANCE Mayfield Trade Centre, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Featuring the Nomads, the original Kix Kats, Arval (Alba tribute band), The Firebats, Hot Wax • Sat, May 1 (5pm) • Proceeds to the Alberta Cancer Foundation

THINKER CLUB CHAMPAGNE LUNCHEON Farmout Hotel Macdonald, Empire Ballroom (482-0198) • Proceeds go to the 24-hour distress line and no-fee walk-in counselling program of the Support Network • Fri, May 7 (11:30am)

WESTERN CABARET St. Basil's Cultural Centre, 10819-71 Ave (989-6035) • Dinner, auction, and dance to the Emeralds Presented by the Knight of Columbus • Sat, May 1 (5:30pm cocktails, 6pm supper, 8pm entertainment 9pm dance) • \$30 • Tickets available by calling Bruce at 989-6035

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0530) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Every Thu (9pm): Music Trivia with Escapade Entertainment • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm): with Escapade Entertainment

BILLY BUDD'S 9839-63 Ave (438-1148) • Karaoke lido contest • Every Sat (8:30pm)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm): Hosted by Jeannie

CLAREVIEW PUB Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave (454-9928) • Every Wed

GAS PUB 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed (9pm)

L.B.'S 23 Alins Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue (9pm) • Sat, May 1 (10am)

LEGENDS 6104-162 St (481-2786) • Every Wed (9pm)

MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon: with Jammin' Jamie

ORLANDO'S I 15163-121 St (457-1195) • Every Sun (9pm)/Wed (10pm)

ORLANDO'S II 135 09-127 St (451-7799) • Every Wed/Thu (9pm)

RATTLESNAKE SALOON (438-8878) • Karaoke Wednesdays

ROSEBOWL PIZZA 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL DOWNTOWN 10604-101 St (423-3499) • Every Tue-Sat (9pm-1am) with Ruth

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL HIGHSTREET 10315-124 St (482-1600) • Daily (9:30pm)

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL OLD STRATHCONA 10475-80 Ave (439-7211) • Thu, Fri, Sat (9:30pm-1:30am)

SHERLOCK HOLMES 10341-82 Ave (433-9676) • Every Sun (9pm): with Scott

STRATHCONA PUB 9514-87 St (465-5478) • Every Wed/Fri (9pm)

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am); every Tue (8pm-midnight)

WINSTONS PUB 9016-132 Ave (457-4883) • Every Wed, Fri, Sat (9:30m-1am) with DJ Centaur SID

WOODY'S 11725 Jasper Ave, upstairs (488-6636) • Every Sat, Sun, Mon with Randy • Every Tue, Wed with Tizzy

CLASSIFIEDS

If you want to place your Classified ad in Vuc Weekly please Carol at 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

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Antique Oak Drafting Table, Unique artifact designed to fold for railway transport. \$1500.00 455-7816 for details

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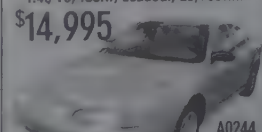
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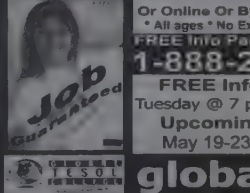
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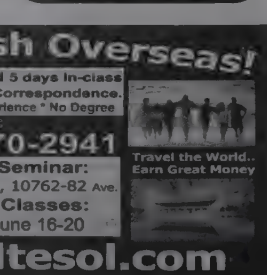
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Stride. A drawing and walking fundraising event to
take place on June 26, 2004. Register: Ph Jen 426-
4180/e-mail: harcourt@telusplanet.net

All alumni of the City Arts Centre are invited to
exhibit their artwork in the show "Artistic
Discoveries 2004" May 28-30. Deadline May 14,
Ph 486-5893 for info.

Call for submissions: 1-year Artist in Residence
at Harcourt House Arts Centre. Deadline May 31.
Info: 426-4180, harcourt@telusplanet.net

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planet.net Ph 426-2122

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Call for submissions: Stanley A. Milner Library invites
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www.ualberta.ca/~outsin or
outsin@ualberta.ca, 492-0767

Edmonton Public Library's Teen Advisory Board
presents Voices Unheard: open mic for teens to
read their stories, poetry, essays, sing,
their own songs. Centre for Reading & the Arts,
Stanley A. Milner Library, Sat, May 8 (sign-up
1-2pm). Call Wendy Gronnstedt at 496-7086.

10th Annual Seven Hills Literary Contest: unpub-
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volunteers

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in
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reception and other light office duties. For more
information call Belinda 423-4102

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in
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Edmonton's only 24 hour distress line answers
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The Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta
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People of all abilities can take part in the popular
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Develop your skills! The New Home Centre is a
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Contact Barbara Nichols: 425-7869
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alt sex column

By ANDREA NEMERSON

In your dreams!

Dear Andrea:
Contrary to your recent columns, I know it's possible to achieve anal penetration of someone in his sleep; I've done it. It was more effective than all my attempts at persuasion when he was awake. I was very gentle and limited my penetration but was surprised he didn't wake up. I felt ashamed and later I foolishly confessed to my now-ex-boyfriend.

His inability to give consent may define the act as rape but it doesn't prove that a crime occurred. Would it be rape if I humped him between the thighs or sucked him? If I'd been accused of rape, I might have resorted to vernal medical theories for a defense, like Freud's interpretation of his young patient Dora (apparently raped in

so. Surely I needn't point out that starting your sentence with "Not to rationalize, but..." does not excuse your actions or your attempt to rationalize them.

Would it have been rape if you'd just humped him, or whatever? Probably not, especially if he hadn't forbidden you to do so. I'm not getting into the fine points of global versus conditional consent, but I will say that you know very well that what you did was at least close enough to rape to lose you his love and respect, if not necessarily close enough to stand up in court. I admit that I would have paid good money to sit in the gallery and watch your lawyer attempt to use either version of Freud's seduction theory in your defense. It wouldn't have worked, but it certainly would have been entertaining.

Love, Andrea

Widow white lies

Dear Andrea:
I'm the "road widow" from the last column. I let my husband have sex with me because he pouts otherwise and I fear letting him go on the road unsatisfied sexually.

I've had a few "girlfriends" with his (reluctant) consent, which he quickly withdraws. He's very fearful that I'll leave him for a woman. I've thought about it. I was

You know very well that what you did was at least close enough to rape to lose you his love and respect, if not necessarily close enough to stand up in court.

her sleep by her father). It was all just a wish-fulfillment dream on the part of my boyfriend! Not to rationalize, but nonconsensual sex is commonplace throughout human history to this day. Think war, prison, marriage, et cetera.

Which brings us to the issue of giving your partner what they want even if it means lying or doing something you don't really want to do. When I was a P.C. bi-boy I faked orgasms with my girlfriend more than once. I was tired, I wasn't near orgasm, and she was as hung up on pleasing me as I was on pleasing her. I only wish I'd learned then that forcing the "truth" on one's partner can be more hurtful than keeping one's transgressions secret and preserving trust.

Love, Guilty Jerk

Dear Jerk:
I'm running your letter more because it's interesting than because I have any particular answers to offer—for that you would have had to ask a question.

I agree—I agreed in the relevant columns, in fact—that it's possible to penetrate a sleeping partner, and I agree with your own self-assessment. ("Guilty Jerk" is your phrase, not mine.) I certainly don't agree that the mere fact that humans have forced sex upon each other in every period and any arena you can imagine does anything to mitigate the unacceptability of your having done

once madly in love and felt that I wanted to be with her forever, but she wouldn't let me leave hubby for her. She said she couldn't give me the material things he can.

I do watch girl-porn and try to insist on condoms to slow him down. He has recently made a halfhearted attempt at foreplay, but even though I demonstrate for him he simply does not get it. So is it possible I just have a preference toward women? And if I'm gay but I don't want to leave him, do you feel that's fair to him? If I'm willing to still have sex with him as he doesn't last that long?

Love, Road Widow

Dear Widow:
Boy, is it ever possible that you simply prefer women. Having the lousy-longer husband doesn't help, but sure, of course you sound bi, not to mention awfully dissatisfied. I suppose it's possible to stay with the guy, but only if you're perfectly open with him, including the part about only tolerating his clumsy pawing and staying with him out of affection and convenience while seeking all your thrills and passionate attachments outside the marriage. Think he'll go for that? Would you?

Love, Andrea @

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.

volunteers

The Sexual Assault Centre need volunteer to help with reception and light office duties. Ph Belinda 423-4102.

Adult Day Support program needs Friendly Visiting Volunteers for frail seniors, commitment of 4 hours per week, call Gwen @ 434-4747.

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volunteers

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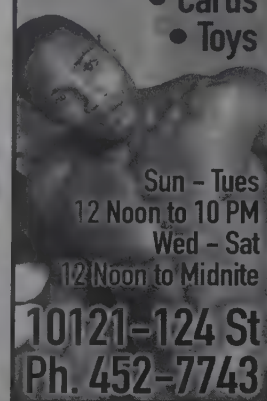
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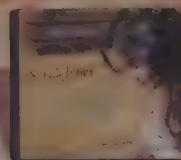
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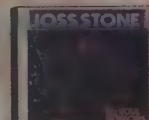
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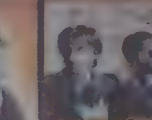


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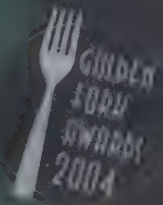
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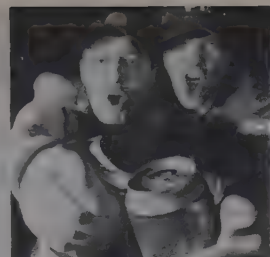
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ON THE COVER

As you can see from the photo on our cover this week, Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow are very, very excited about their new play, 3... 2... 1. But get your mind-out of the gutter; that's just beer foam you see spurting everywhere. Their play is similarly messy—it's an intense comedy/drama that tackles drugs, booze, masculinity and the horror of growing up in Wetaskiwin • 43



FRONT

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three
dollar
bill

BY RICHARD BURNETT

Starsky and Cox

I'd pick up more condoms and buy more lube if I knew I was getting laid this weekend. Which is why I tore through my copy of the just-published guide *Sextrology: The Astrology of Sex and the Sexes* by ubiquitous New Yorkers Stella Starsky and her partner (in business and pleasure) Quinn Cox.

"I was on a city bus reading your chapter on gay Gemini men," I told Starsky and Cox over coffee, "and I was conscious of the fact that other passengers were checking out what I

was reading."

"They probably thought you're a flake and a pervert!" Cox cracks.

He's right, even though many of my fellow passengers probably like two things in their daily newspapers: sex and astrology columns. Imagine if you combined them so you could predict your own sex life?

You'd have a groundbreaking best-seller, which is exactly what Starsky and Cox have written. And unlike so many other astrology and sex guides, this one is fabulously in-your-face gay. "We're giving gays and lesbians a little extra—a special prize," Starsky explains. "Each sign has two or three more pages [for them] because if you're gay, you're special."

Starsky and Cox have been writing astrology columns for years. "Our most famous column ran in *Teen People* for five years," says Cox. "What that did was establish 24 signs—12 for girls and 12 for guys. We believe that males and females of the same sign are absolutely different signs. A Gemini man is so different from a Gemini woman."

"Different animal," Starsky chimes

in. "Different character."

"We also noticed this [constant] flipping," Cox continues. "Straight men and lesbians in any given sign share many characteristics."

So in *Sextrology*, Starsky and Cox take their formula one step further and give readings for gays and straights.

For example, take my sign, Gemini. "He is the zodiac's premier urbane figure," Starsky and Cox write. "Partygoing is a particularly Geminiian penchant." But the gay Gemini "especially enjoys indulging his more overt bottom fantasies. Regardless of their erotic repertoire, affection will be keynote—constant cooing, kissing, touching, as well as exhaustive foreplay routines, are must-haves for the Gemini man. But when the Twins does get itchy for sleazier scenarios, it usually centres on his penchant for pleasing: his primary fantasy is generally to become wholly subservient to a sexual badass."

But, I warn you, only in bed.

Reading about Gemini can be boring.

SEE PAGE 4

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The Austin chronicles

Texas capital is
Edmonton's bigger,
louder and even
artier twin brother

By BRIAN GIBSON

In the centre of an area best known for its oil and its right-wing politics, sprawled out on both sides of a river, lies a capital city that houses a community of liberals and lefty student activists, contains a large university near a strip of bohemian stores and boasts a heritage-building enclave of bars and clubs teeming with nightlife. No, not Edmonton—although the surface similarities between this Texan city of two million and our own fair metropolis are obvious. But as my girlfriend and I discovered, tramping through the streets of Austin during our five-day visit in late April, the Lone Star State capital offers its own idiosyncratic twists and fascinating contrasts to Edmonton.

After landing late Thursday in the newly-built and bustling Austin-Bergstrom airport, we noticed, even through the ink of night, that the landscape was a mix of green, low-hanging trees and dusty earth studded with scrub and brush. The air was humid, but the temperature hospitably remained in the low 20s. Our room (\$70 U.S. a night) was in a truly roadside motel. The traffic on Interstate 35 surged past high above, while cars rushed past on a freeway below that was surrounded on either side by local roads. Crossing this concrete jungle on foot to get to a 24-hour diner for some fajitas meant walking under an overpass and over an underpass at the same time.

Fajitas seem to be the staple item on most menus in Austin—the best we had were at the second-floor restaurant at the Hyatt on the south side of the lush, park-lined Colorado River, much deeper and more impres-

sive than the North Saskatchewan. After devouring the skillet-sizzled beef and chicken strips garnished with sour cream, tangy guacamole and salsa inside flour tortillas, we headed down to the riverboat by the bank. For eight dollars each, we took an hour-long sunset cruise, floating past a statue of longtime Austinite Stevie Ray Vaughan—other famous residents, past and present, include short-story writer O. Henry, director Richard Linklater and Tour de France champ Lance Armstrong—and around an anchored rig drilling for oil before the motorized, pretend-paddlewheeler turned around, taking us under the Congress Avenue bridge. There, we waited for the bats.

AUSTIN HAS the largest urban colony of *Chiroptera* on the continent—most of the year, between 700,000 and 800,000 female Mexican free-tailed bats stay in the crevices of the bridge until, at sunset, they flit out to feed on insects. Hundreds of people gather on the bridge or shore to watch the colony (which doubles when the females give birth to a pup each in late July) ribbon through the bridge struts, navigating by echolocation, before the specks of black wings, tittering and squeaking, stream out over the lush banks of the Colorado. The shadowy clusters of flying mammals under the Congress bridge inspired the moniker for Austin's hockey team, the Ice Bats.

Congress is the spine of the hilly city, running up past polite panhandlers on the wide sidewalks to the impressive Capitol building, now housing Dubya's successor, Republican governor Rick Perry. Extensive, groomed grounds, spotless walls and walkways, and ever-present police emphasize the difference between Texas's Capitol and Alberta's Legislature—American politics involve far more money and an equal amount

6th Street
Downtown Austin



of self-serious grandeur.

To the south of the Capitol, running off from Congress to the west and east, are the Warehouse and 6th Street districts. A collection of bars and swanky restaurants in the bowels of Texas's new high-tech hub, Warehouse attracts a predominantly white, upper-class crowd of corporate types. One night, though, sitting on a leather-padded bench at Cuba Libre, we enjoyed some delicious

tapas (appetizers) of chips with piquante guacamole and bacon-wrapped jalapeño peppers filled with cheese and shrimp.

A few blocks over lies 6th Street. In the early '90s, Austin remade itself as the Live Music Capital of the World and, though we had come a month after the famous South by Southwest festival, the four blocks of pubs and clubs are the year-round reason for the city's nickname. The strip throbs away in the heart of downtown, dwarfed but never eclipsed by skyscraping bank headquarters and hotel towers. Peaches, Division of Laura Lee, DJ Shadow and Joss Stone were in town that weekend. Underneath refurbished marquees and within aged brick and wood, bands pounded

blues, rock and jazz beats out onto the pavement where grizzled, tattooed men mingled with curious tourists and packs of teenagers.

BUT AWAY FROM 6TH STREET, there was hardly a pedestrian to be seen. BMWs, Acuras and other sleek vehicles parked outside restaurants in Warehouse spat out their flashy occupants and waited to be driven home. Dozens of parking garages litter the area around the Capitol, either underground or on layers of concrete slanting up from street level. The first night we were on 6th, the city's eclectic art scene collided head-on with its car culture in a Car Art Parade, showing off such vehicles as a car covered in fur with steer horns on top and another churning out bubbles from a wheel on its trunk.

Directly north of the Capitol, a Spanish Renaissance-style tower with 56 bells rises above the Main Building of the 357-acre campus of the University of Texas at Austin, swelling with 54,000 students. Red-roofed, Mexican-villa-style buildings mix with the grandiose Roman Empire aspirations of various patriotic statues, the columned Texas Memorial Museum,

SEE PAGE 8

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Continued from page 2

if you're not a Gemini. But astrology books remain popular because everybody loves to read about themselves. "It taps into the natural self-indulgence of human beings," Starksy agrees.

And Lord knows gay folks are some of the most self-indulgent human beings on the planet.

Starksy and Cox fill each page with fun advice for all kinds of relationships. "In our book, every combination can work," Starksy says. "It's a matter of what you want at that time in your life and what qualities that partner brings out in you."

And if it's just sex you want, well Sex-trology has plenty of that too. "If [society] has you sexually repressed, they have you in a good place to make you frustrated, militarized—I think it's a political agenda [from which] people need to be liberated," Cox rants as Starksy nods her head.

"There should be no stigma attached to sex or astrology," Starksy concludes. "So read our book on the bus!"



MEDIA

U.S. outranks Canada in terms of press freedom

Despite a few setbacks here and there, such as CanWest's firing of *Ottawa Citizen* editor-in-chief Russell Mills for an editorial that criticized Jean Chrétien or the RCMP's recent invasion of *Citizen* reporter Juliet O'Neill's personal documents, most of us likely feel that we enjoy a relatively free press here in Canada. But according to an annual report from Freedom House released Monday to mark World Press Freedom Day, we may not have things as good as we think.

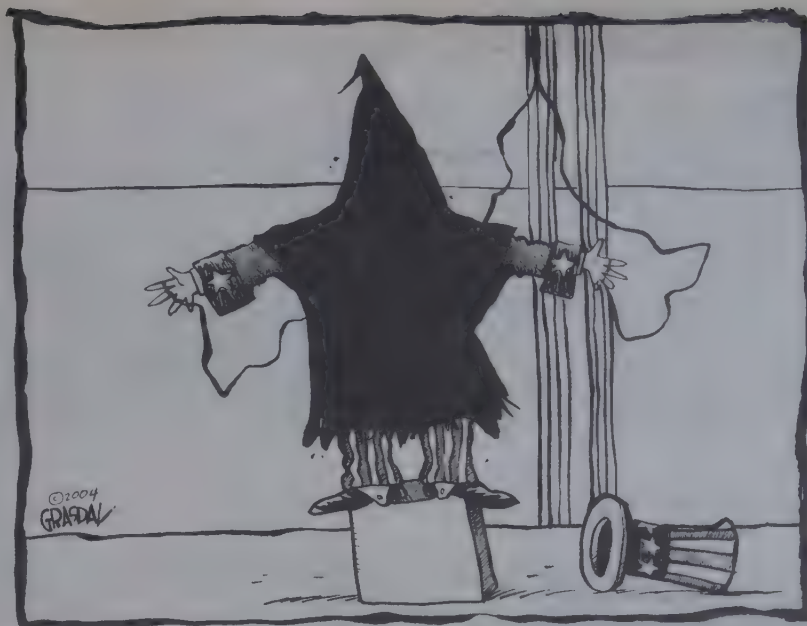
The study is the result of a survey the assesses the degree of print, broadcast and Internet autonomy in every country in the world, assigning to each category a rating of Free, Partly Free or Not Free. Overall, the study grimly concludes that the proportion of the world's population living in countries with free media has declined by five per cent over the last two years. Of the 193 countries surveyed, 73 were rated Free with no marked restrictions on news media; 49 were Partly Free, displaying some degree of media restriction; and 71 countries were rated Not Free, showing strong state control or other obstacles to free press.

"Fewer and fewer people throughout the world have uncensored and unfettered access to information about their own countries," said study coordinator and Freedom House Executive Director Jennifer Windsor. "Most distressing is that some of this deterioration is taking place in democracies, where a free press is a necessary component of vibrant democratic life."

The study points to Italy in particular, where increased media concentration and subsequent political pressure led to the downgrading of the country from Free to Partly Free. "Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has been able to exert undue influence over the public broadcaster RAI," said Karin Deutsch Karlekar, the survey's managing editor. "This further exacerbates an already worrisome media environment characterized by unbalanced coverage within Berlusconi's enormous media empire." Berlusconi's media holdings include Italy's three largest private television stations.

According to the study, Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, Belgium and Finland were the leaders of the pack in terms of press freedom, while the five countries with the least amount of media liberty were Libya, Burma, Turkmenistan, Cuba and North Korea. Canada, meanwhile, placed 23rd out of the 193 countries surveyed, a ranking that ties us with Malta (really) but is a surprising 10 notches below the United States.

Specifics on Canada's ranking are not yet available on the Freedom House website, but I'm going to venture a guess and suggest that maybe having a giant media conglomerate that owns the majority of our newspapers and a national TV network might have hurt us a bit. —CHRIS BOUTER



ENVIRONMENT

North America rejects fuel-efficient cars

With the price of gas threatening to crest the 80 cents/litre mark, chances are that your wallet is already being strained at the pumps. But if recent Canadian and American vehicle sales stats are any indication, it looks like the simple rules of supply and demand are poised to make matters far worse for the driving public.

According to Statistics Canada, new vehicle sales were down by 12.1 per cent in February 2004 from last year. This may seem like a good sign, but of those buying vehicles, 48.6 per cent chose a vehicle from the "truck, bus or van" category, which includes the new demon of the roadway, the SUV, up from 45.5 per cent last year. Further complicating matters is the fact that the same thing's happening down south; the *Chicago Tribune* reports that SUV sales in the U.S. are up 10 per cent in 2004 over the same selling periods for 2003.

With gas-guzzling SUVs taking up an even larger share of the vehicles on the road throughout North America, gas stocks will be strained even more by consumers looking to fill up all those extra-large and oh-so-thirsty SUVs. And, considering that SUV sales continue to rise despite the meteoric rise of gasoline prices, consumers are showing that they'll pay what they have to at the pumps—another surefire sign of further gas price increases ahead.

What's even more troubling is that in the States, sales of fuel-efficient vehicles, from hybrids to four-cylinder compacts, have dropped seven per cent in 2004. Because of this, the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration is expecting demand for oil to reach more than 9.3 million barrels a day, a new record.

These findings must be discouraging for the Canadian government, which launched the "One Tonne Challenge" in March. The challenge calls for each and every Canadian to cut their

annual greenhouse-gas output by one-fifth, or one metric tonne. The major target is the transportation sector, which generates 25 per cent of all greenhouse-gas emissions in Canada per year.

If the government was hoping that Canadians would embrace the emissions reduction challenge, our increasing love of vehicles with eight cylinders shows that we're more than willing to take our lumps at the pump and burp as much exhaust into the atmosphere as we can—all in the name of convenience. —STEVEN SANDOR

HEALTH

Study validates Canadian medicare system

Amid claims throughout Alberta and across the country that the state of Canadian medicare is in serious decline, a recent international study has found quite the opposite to be true.

Conducted by the Commonwealth Fund (a private, New York-based research foundation that promotes independent research on health and social issues), the study, which was published this week in the policy journal *Health Affairs*, states that Canadians spend much less for healthcare than Americans, yet show comparable or even better health outcomes.

The study, which also looked at healthcare systems in England, New Zealand and Australia, considered 21 key indicators in its rankings, including survival rates for key types of cancer, kidney and liver transplants, heart attacks and strokes, as well as rates of mammography to detect breast cancer and the frequency of "avoidable events" such as suicides, asthma deaths and cases of preventable diseases like pertussis, measles and hepatitis B. Even though Canada's per capita spending on health is 57 per cent of that in the U.S., survival rates were found to be better for colorectal cancer, childhood leukemia, kidney and liver transplants and hepatitis B.

Canada is below average in care for

the very elderly and in polio vaccination rates, and also has the worst record for heart attack survival, but the best rates of survival from childhood leukemia.

The results of the study were promising for Canadian healthcare groups who feel the current system is working and that an American-style, user-pay system similar to what Alberta is considering would only produce the same results at a higher cost. "We actually do better in some measures than the U.S. does," said John Millar of the B.C. Provincial Health Services Authority and a co-author of the study in an interview with the Canadian Press. I think these data are really very encouraging for the healthcare system. —CHRIS BOUTER

AWARDS

Vue scribe up for national award

Fans of Nomeansno and their related musical side projects may know that "Self-Aggrandizement Keeps Us Going" is the title of the *Show Business Giants'* most recent album, but it also just happens to be the rallying cry of those of us who work for this fine publication. Hence, it is in the spirit of this ongoing effort to give ourselves credit where we humbly think credit is due that we are pleased to announce that former *Vue* news editor Dan Rubinstein has been declared a finalist in the Politics and Public Affairs category of this year's National Magazine Awards for his feature "Head in the Sands," an examination at Fort McMurray's rapid, oil-fueled expansion and its effect on the community at large, which was originally published by *Alberta Views* and reprinted by *Vue* in our March 27, 2003 issue under the title "Strife in a northern town."

The *Vue* staff would like to wish Dan the best of luck as the winners are announced on June 11 in Toronto, and would also like to remind him that he should keep us in mind once he's rich, famous and looking for an extra tax-exempted donation to claim on his return. —CHRIS BOUTER



By T.J. MAIR

Hate to disturb you

Last week, the Canadian Senate finally passed Bill C-250 by a vote of 59 to 11 with three abstentions. The bill proposed to change the Criminal Code by adding gay and lesbian people as an "identifiable group" to be protected from persecution under hate propaganda legislation.

According to Kris Wells, facilitator for Youth Understanding Youth, a local gay and lesbian rights group, says the bill "not only sends a strong message to Canadians, but it also continues to put Canada at the leading edge of the human rights movement in the world."

Fundamentalist religious groups and right wing lobby groups have committed a lot of energy toward stopping Bill C-250. Four groups met the Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on March 17 towards this end; one of the groups, the Canadian Family Action Centre, claimed that passage of this bill would stifle their right to express concerns about sexual orientation. The CFAC stated that their main concern is the "medical dangers of homosexual behaviour," adding that "discussion and debate about the medical consequences would be prohibited and would be regarded as hate propaganda" if the bill were to become law.

Link Byfield, former editor of *Alberta Report* and current president of Edmonton-based lobby group Citizens Centre for Freedom and Democracy, has worked tirelessly against C-250. He contends that C-250 is a gag law, arguing that "free speech is destroyed," and that people will suffer "arbitrary prosecution for voicing their honest beliefs" with this law. Byfield feels that the Svend Robinson's bill creates imbalance. "None of [Robinson's] opponents tried to suppress his right of free speech," Byfield has said. "So why is he so hell-bent on taking away theirs?"

But what rights have really been taken away? The right to picket funerals holding signs quoting Leviticus while directing condemnations at mourning friends and family? The right to fire a person because of their sexual orientation? The right to sit outside a gay bar with some buddies in a pickup truck waiting to punch someone?

It took a long time to add the two words "sexual orientation" to the Criminal Code, and the religious right have fought the bill's passage with vigour. At their behest, a few opposed Tory Senators and one Liberal—Anne Cools—have spent months trying to stall proceedings in hopes that Paul Martin would call an election and kill the bill. But now, it looks like Quentin Tarantino is the only person having any bills killed this spring. ☹

In the spirit of fairness

Ethical entrepreneurs converge to sell their wares during Fair Trade Week

By SHERYLE CARLSON

"Something I got from a university professor of mine was that money is a system of valuing things, and every penny you spend is a vote for what is important to your value system," says Vivian Blacklock of the Bopenian Fair Trade Company of Canada. "So when you're buying things, you're actually voting for the method of treatment of people, that style of business, that way of life."

Blacklock, 27, and her sister, Sheila, 23, started their company last year, selling clothing and bedding

made by women in a small community in northern Laos. The sisters buy the hand-crafted goods at market value, and the Laotian women have pooled their money and have started building wells for their communities. "We were actually on our way to Hong Kong to get into a novelty product line which would have been stuff made in Chinese sweatshops," explains Blacklock.

During their travels, the sisters were amazed by the hospitality shown them by families who had nothing but the clothes on their backs. It was an eye-opening experience for the entrepreneurs. "We couldn't just continue on and say, 'Well, thanks for that wonderful experience. Now we're going to take similar people just like you to make some dust-collecting crap that's going to end up in people's houses they're going to be cursing at and

throwing into a garage sale 15 minutes later,'" Blacklock explains. "We could have taken our money and started a really successfully company with just about anything with a Made in China sticker on it. We instead chose to do something that would mean our money was going towards something our personal values and beliefs were in line with."

THEIR COMPANY WILL BE one of more than 40 groups getting together on May 12 for **Small Change, Big Difference: Edmonton's National Fair Trade Week**. Transfair Canada, Canada's only certification body for fair trade products, has co-ordinated this nationwide event as part of their education and outreach program to show people that paying a little more for a product can have huge impact.

Chantal Havard of Transfair defines fair trade as "an alternative system that is aimed at helping marginalized producers from developing countries, helping them have access to fair trade markets where they receive a fair trade price for their products." Transfair adheres to monitoring criteria and standards set out by the Germany-based Fairtrade Labeling Organization Interna-

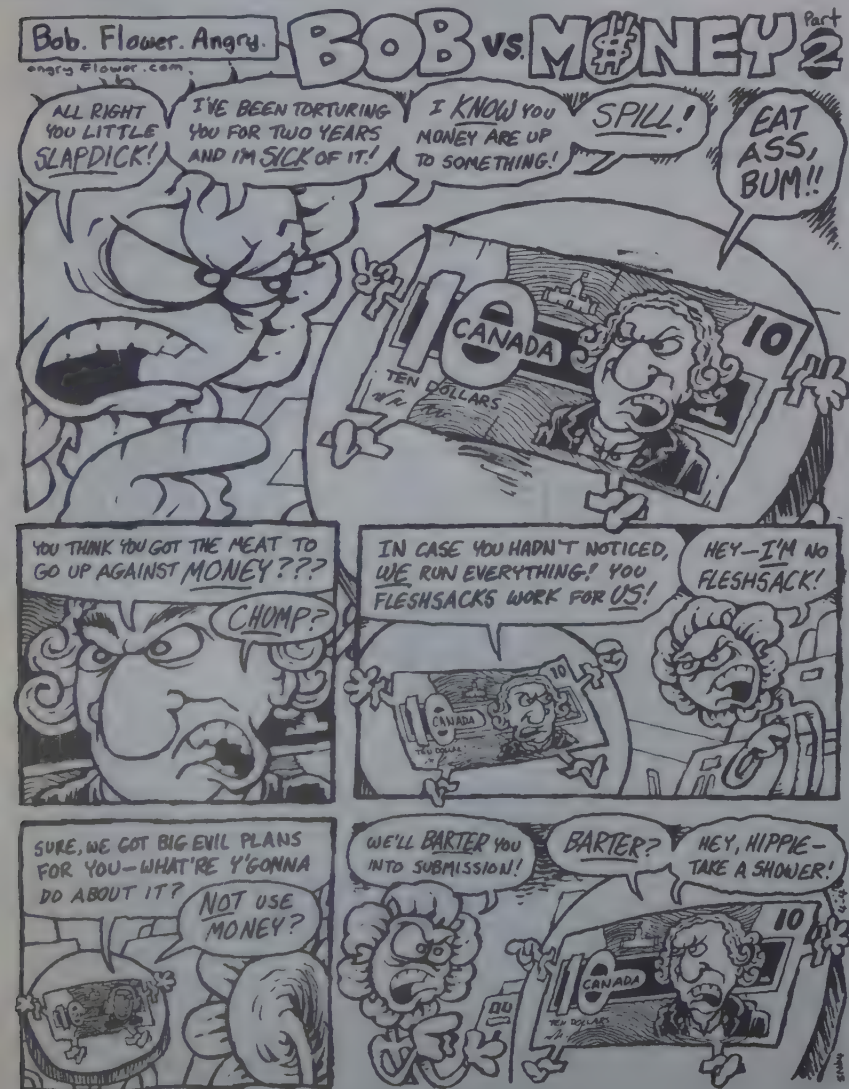
last September. The film explores how capitalist markets are distorting world prices and how the United States is violating global trade rules.

Ottawa filmmaker Jeremy Wright explains why the trade discussions in Cancun fell apart. "This meeting was touted by the WTO as a 'development round,'" he says, "and it wasn't about development at all. It was about the northern countries pushing their agendas on the developing nations. The developing nations stood up and said, 'No, we're not prepared to give up our healthcare, our water to the monopoly corporations of the first world until you start to budging on the issue of agricultural subsidies.' And they walked out, one after the other after the other. Some people say free trade has to be good without realizing that this is free access to our markets by the multinationals. It has nothing to do with trade but with takeover."

BESIDES FILM SCREENINGS, buffets, music and workshops for everyone from elementary to university students, the event will provide a venue so that the public can find out where to access fair trade products locally.

Even though Canada is one of the fastest growing markets for fair

SEE PAGE 8



PREVIEW EVENTS

tional (FLO). Havard explains that this system was made for people who were not able to make a living due to the laws of the foreign market and international trade organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank. "We are not working against those organizations," she says, "but are trying to come up with a positive and viable alternative. We have lots of partners like OXFAM and other NGOs that work more on the policy level trying to influence the big decision makers."

After Cancun: Free Trade or Fair Trade, one of several films to be screened at the Edmonton event, showcases Council of Canadians activist Maude Barlow and Pierre Pettigrew, who was the Minister of International Trade at the time and part of the Cancun WTO meeting

Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)

You will become a
Star this week, or at least you
Will burst into flames

TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)

Take it easy this
Week, since next week you will be
Captured by pirates

GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)

Impersonating
A large sloth will only get
You so far in life

CANCER

(June 21-July 22)

You took the blue pill
Now you will never know what
Happened to that sock

LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)

A ten-dollar watch
Is a good way to show you
Care, but not that much

VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)

Why not take a trip
While you're gone I'll watch your house
As it is burgled

LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)

Beware the cobra
Its venom is quick and its
Stories are boring

SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)

Hunger will pang you
Now would be a good time to
Look up the word "pang"

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)

Truth isn't pretty
But it has a certain charm
Like a talking rat

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)

Getting in touch with
Your feminine side does not
Mean groping yourself

AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)

Looking for a name
For your new band? How about
"The Band You'll Soon Hate"?

PISCES

(Feb 19-Mar 20)

Bad news for Pisces
Ursa Major finally
Caught and ate your sign

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VUEWEEKLY

7

MAY 6-12, 2004

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Lonsdale Mall
Millwoods Towne Centre
Northgate Mall
Southgate Mall
West Edmonton Mall
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Downtown

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Attn Computers
10025 Jasper Ave. #36

Connect
TELUS Plaza North
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Save On Telecom
10528 - 102 St

WEST END

Communications Group
10620 - 178 St
Johnson Cellular
10428 - 178th St. #100
Save On Telecom
17542 - 100th Ave
TAC Mobility
9935 - 170 St
Wireless Technology
10203 - 178th St

NORTH

Communications Group
13040 - 50 St
Custom Cellular
Skyview Power Centre
13322 - 137 Ave. North West
Edmonton Cellular
14903 - 118 Ave
Edmonton Wireless
10235 - 124th St. #101
Save On Telecom
11150 - 149 St
Wireless Cellular
12804 - 126 St
Wireless City
12618 - 124 St

SOUTH

Edmonton Wireless
3424 - 95th St
Alta-Comm Wireless
8710 - 51st Ave
Communications Group
5926 - 99 St
Communications Group
3739 - 99 St
Custom Communications
South Edmonton Common
1916 - 99 St
Edmonton Cellular
10309 - 34 Ave
TAC Mobility
4515 Gateway Blvd
Wireless City
5912 - 104 St
Xcell Communications
4909 - 99 St
First Saskatchewan
Associated Telecom
9914 - 103 St
Cambridge Electronics
10420 - 98 Ave. #350
Leduc
Communications 2000
5904 - 50 St. #68
Complete Communications
5205 - 60 Ave
Leduc Communications Inc
F109 - 45 St. #7
Sherwood Park
Hemo's Cellular
875 Ordie Rd
Complete Communications
2020 Sherwood Dr. #9
Spruce Grove
Maximum Mobility
131 First Ave. #108
Spruce Grove Sound
116 Westland Market Mall
St. Albert
Global Cell Communications
20A Mur Dr
St. Albert Communications
11 Pennon St
Save On Telecom
229 St. Albert Centre
Stony Plain
Starview Communications
5101 - 48th St. #107

still needs to be developed. I think a lot of people are willing to buy fair trade products if they can find them easily."

But the question remains: are people willing to pay a bit more? "It's a tough choice to make," Blacklock replies, "because it's much easier to walk in and get something made in China that's 99 cents than it is to grin and bear and understand that if you pay \$2.99 you're going to get something that is (a) better quality

and (b) the money is being used to feed a family."

It's been a lot of work, Blacklock says, "but sometimes the things that you have do in life aren't always the easy ones, but definitely the most important." ●

**SMALL CHANGE, BIG DIFFERENCE:
EDMONTON'S NATIONAL
FAIR TRADE WEEK**

Queen Alexandra Hall • Wed, May 12
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Austin

Continued from page 4

and the Colosseum-like stadium. The home of the Longhorns soars into the sky, its curved stone façade on one side of the athletic cauldron pillaring up into light towers which umbrella over the seemingly unending rows of seats.

Running north alongside the university on Guadalupe Street is the Drag, a bohemian area of vintage clothing stores sullied only by the looming boxes of Tower Records and Barnes and Noble. We entered boutiques where a multi-ethnic mix of students scammed about in their flip-flops or retro New Balance shoes, looking for a cool T-shirt or funky skirt.

Unlike North Garneau, there are no quaint old houses surrounding UT. So on our last day in Austin, we took a half-hour walk north of the campus to explore the historic neighbourhood of Hyde Park, its bungalows and century-old homes displaying even more architectural styles (Craftsmen, Queen Anne, Tudor Revival) than the heritage sites of Old Strathcona. The first moonlight tower of 31 installed in 1895 still stood—the 165-foot, thin iron frames supporting carbon arc lamps were thought to be easier to maintain, and would cast a wider glow than many smaller streetlamps.

ON MONDAY AFTERNOON, as we walked around a souvenir store in the airport, I passed by mugs emblazoned

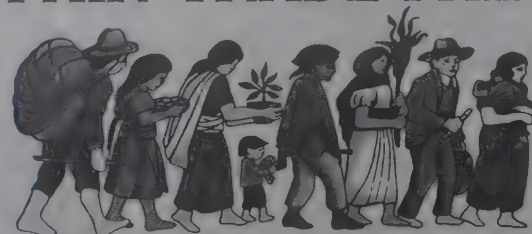
with "Keep Austin Weird," and my mind flashed back to Saturday night. We'd gone into a 6th Street club, each paying a \$10 cover charge, for a CD release party. After being handed the CD, we sat at a back table with our drinks, surveying the scene. The bass thrummed along as funk-rock played and costumed people skipped and danced throughout the place. The band, Daves Not Here, dressed up as various "superfreaks" from El Toro Bravo to DJ Boom, were accompanied on some songs by two well-dressed guys blowing trumpet and sax. The lead singer was a curly-haired, green-costumed white rapper, backed up on vocals by a Zorro-masked, leather-corseted vamp. After their penultimate song, "Vanilla Gorilla," these sex-obsessed Village People/Doobie Brothers hybrids, who seemed to have escaped from the recesses of Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory, went into overdrive. Lead singer Gyno Lotraman stripped down to a thong, while silver-suited guitarist Captain Phallus strapped on a large foam namesake.

There were no cowboy hats, guns, twangy accents or "y'all's." There was just an unmistakable vibe in the place, a club with few people but a lot of noise and character. It was the sound and look of a city that was confident without being cocky, relaxed without being too cool and just weird enough to be endearing.

Edmonton's distant American cousin may be bigger, louder and wealthier, but it's Austin's infectious spark and quirky energy that make it worth visiting. ●

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print culture

By CHRISTOPHER WIEBE

Mayr's no simpleton

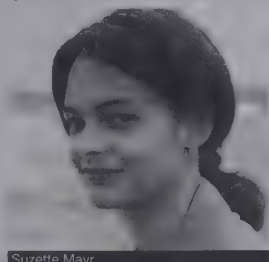
Whenever I hear people doubting whether creative writing can be taught, I wonder if they think writers spontaneously erupt from the soil like those fungal puffballs filled with brown powder. And what about any number of programs of study that don't impart a readily identifiable array of skills? Can the art of business really be taught in MBA programs? Regardless, today's university-based creative writing programs are just the latest versions of the literary salons that thrived in former days. Think of the 18th-century English coffeehouses or the enduring Russian habit of reading works in progress aloud to peers for comment. And where would Hemingway have been without Gertrude Stein's sitting room tutelage?

In recent months, Alberta's largest universities made two very significant hirings in their English department-nestled creative writing programs. **Suzette Mayr**, a U of A writing grad, was hired on at the University of Calgary, joining Aritha van Herk, Pamela Banting, Nicole Markotic and Tom Wayman. A part of the road, **Thomas Wharton** (a writing grad of Calgary and U of A) stands in the company of Douglas Barbour, M.E. Sargent, Bert Almon and Greg Hollingshead.

Wharton arrives on the scene with a rucksack full of experience teaching writing at the U of A, Grant MacEwan and Athabasca University. I asked him whether living in Alberta mattered to his writing and teaching. "Often my writing students set their stories 'nowhere,'" he says, "in a kind of generic urban space, because they've grown up with the idea that real stories, real books, are from elsewhere. I urge them to look at the place where they live, to really see

it, to draw upon it in their work. Even if they don't end up writing about Edmonton or Alberta, they are deeply influenced by the place they live, and so they should pay careful attention to it."

That said, Wharton gets frustrated with the "western writer" compartment that the parochial-minded Canadian media has put him in. "It's amazing to see to see what happens if you don't write to 'type,'" he says. In 2001, when he published *Salamander*, a fantastical sea story with a European sensibility, the media had a hard time figuring him out. Hadn't his first novel, 1995's *Ice-fields*, been about Jasper and glaciers and exploration writing? "When *Quill & Quire* did a feature article on me and



Suzette Mayr

the novel," he says, "they sent a photographer who took my picture in front of a barn! I went along with it, grateful for the publicity. And so it goes—do you bite the hand that feeds you?" It happens to others in "the regions" as well. Wharton points to the way even "hot" Maritime writers are still categorized in terms of region and not so much in terms of their national significance.

Mayr, who taught writing at the Alberta College of Art for many years, shares a similar perspective. I asked her about writing and teaching in a province whose government consistently devalues and underfunds cultural activity. "I think Alberta is very, very lucky to have two such high-profile university creative writing departments," she says, "that consistently produce writers who, despite the ever-dwindling lack of support from the Alberta government, continue to excel on the national and international stages. The paucity of support for writers and artists from the provincial government makes

me embarrassed as a writer and teacher."

Mayr recalls how important her first Alberta Foundation for the Arts grant in the early 1990s was for her as a beginning writer, a sign that what she was doing was valuable and worthy. As a recent Writers Guild of Alberta president, she saw this type of support being eroded and wonders if it will exist at all 10 years from now. "Without writers from here who write about here," Mayr says in the shoot-from-the-hip-style that shaped her novels *Moon Honey* (1995) and *The Widows* (1998), "Alberta is going to disappear and become a strictly one-dimensional economic, political entity and nothing else. Get off your asses and support your writers and artists, you short-sighted government jerks! Otherwise you'll have no more art to decorate your goddamn boardrooms!"

Huggan behaviour

Two weeks ago, Isabel Huggan's *Belonging: Home Away From Home* outstripped a strong field of nominees to win the 2004 Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction. With two previous collections of short stories, Huggan's latest work dances nimbly between memoir, creative nonfiction and fiction—whatever those terms still mean. A "whither-thought" spouse, Huggan left Ottawa for Kenya with her development worker husband in the mid-'80s and has been living abroad ever since in places like the Philippines and an old stone house in southern France's Cévennes. Drawing on these experiences, *Belonging* explores the ideas of place and exile through character and incident rather than theoretical speculation, readily expressing how a sense of belonging can take up residence abroad.

"In telling stories to friends," Huggan says, "I recognized that I had begun shaping these memories and that these stories could have a life of their own." They developed further in "Letters Home" for the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Brick* magazine. "In memoir," she says, "it is even more important to leave things out and keep the writing fast-paced than in fiction, where you can assume readers are in for the long haul. And in order to have the narrative make sense, you have to engage in a kind of lying, in creative nonfiction to heighten the drama." ●

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Requiem for a dreamer

Outlaw novelist
Hubert Selby, Jr.
takes his last exit

By JOSEF BRAUN

"Thirty-six hours before I was born I started to die," Hubert Selby, Jr. once explained. "Dying became a way of life." He was being asphyxiated in the womb by his umbilical cord, suffering brain damage in the process, and he exited the womb plagued with a string of illnesses. Selby came into this world with a little more pain, suffering and rage than most. He did his best to pull these afflictions—the pain that dwells within all of us to some degree—out of the shadows and into the world of blackened pages. We can only hope he left this world with a bit less of it. Hubert Selby died last week, April 26, of chronic pulmonary disease in Los Angeles. He was 75 years old.

If Selby's birth on July 23, 1928 was pre-empted by disease and near-death, his birth as a writer would prove equally difficult. Years before he began the pieces that would finally form his first novel, *Last Exit to Brooklyn* (1964), Selby's career as a merchant seaman was cut short by TB, picked up abroad during the war. He was written off as a goner and

sent home. Miraculously, he survived, but only after the removal of 10 ribs and three and a half years in hospital, the extended treatment leaving him with an addiction to opiates. When he finally recovered, Selby was without prospects, to say the least, having never even finished high school. Always self-effacing, Selby maintained that he lacked any natural talent, but "I knew the alphabet, so I figured I could write."

And write and write. Selby may

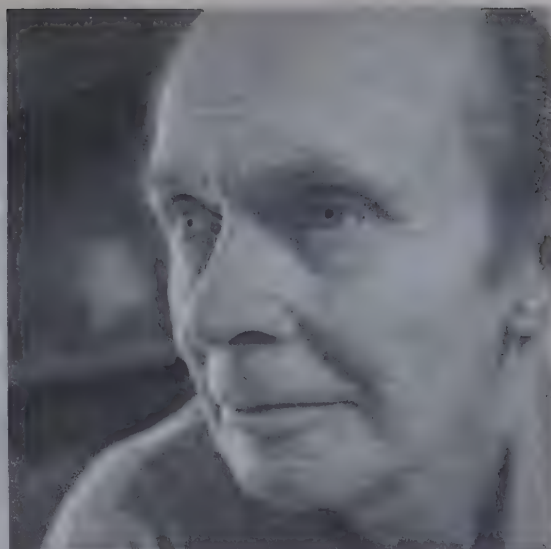
OBITUARY

have only published seven books in his lifetime, but he wrote hard and long to bring them to life. The "Tralala" section of *Last Exit* took him two and a half years alone. Aside from its being a testament to Selby's arduousness, what's so remarkable about this extended writing process is that even after so many reworkings, "Tralala," like the other sections in the book, is so disarmingly intimate and off-the-cuff. The violence and humiliation is burished to a cold gleam, but the honesty and fragility of Selby's voice remain pure.

Last Exit, so disturbing and raw both in content and style (Selby always wrote in phonetic vernacular and seemed to have had an allergy to apostrophes), was the subject of

years of censorship trials in both the U.S. and the U.K. (It shared its publisher, Grove Press, with the likes of Jean Genet, Henry Miller and William S. Burroughs.) Rife with rapes, beatings, homosexuality, drugs, labour disputes and, worst of all, the constant undermining of the American Dream, it was considered obscene, yet Selby claimed to merely write what he saw growing up in the waterfront Red Hook district of Brooklyn. "These are not literary characters," Selby said. "These are real people. I knew these people."

WHAT LAST EXIT BROUGHT to literature that differed from the Beats, from precursors like Céline or Dosztoevsky and from hard-boiled pulp was not only the harrowing extremes of pain, obsession and savagery it presented but the compassion shot through it all. That's the crazy balance that drew me to it, anyway, as a teenager growing up with little to no awareness of the sort of lives Selby was describing in its pages. The world of Burroughs was sickeningly fascinating and laceratingly satirical, but Selby's had heart. He gave us the ugliest of the ugly, the lowliest of the downtrodden, but he cared for these animals anyway, realized that even their most horrendous acts could be linked to a simple need for love and communion. (In this sense, Selby's



truest inheritor isn't a literary figure but musician Lou Reed. Listen to *Berlin* or *New York* and you'll see what I mean.)

The film versions of *Last Exit* and *Requiem for a Dream* have done much to help keep Selby's works in print (though *The Room* remains lost in obscurity despite the fact that Selby considered it his best work). Both films have their merits, yet Selby's prose, perhaps because it's so extreme, needs to live in your mind,

in the private space of the reader. His impeccable voices intermingle and echo, tumbling out in long paragraphs, surrounding you. These voices read as though Selby dictated them, was haunted by them and needed to let them out. His books are like surgically removed tumours, stripped of threat but no less real, inviting us to make peace with them. The catharsis exists almost nowhere in the texts themselves, but within us. ●


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The smell of sea-dwelling lifeforms fills the air, and the East Coast music in the background makes me feel as though I've been suddenly transported to the Rock. I'm searching for the words to describe the dining area, a compact section featuring artistic depictions of fish and unsurprisingly, lighthouses. Then it hits me: "rustic oceanic atmosphere." (Okay, so that's what it says on the menu. So sue me.) Speaking of menus, I'm loving the Lighthouse's lunch edition. The level of sophistication is greater than I'd anticipated, what with the red Peruvian trout and Cajun prawn pizza. And the dinner menu is even more in-depth, featuring a list of stuff that makes my mouth water—paella, Hawaiian bigeye tuna, bouillabaisse and California striped bass with a mandarin fennel glaze. Very nice. And the wine list seems reasonably priced, too—I see a bottle of Australian Rosemount shiraz-cabernet is \$23 and I know the same bottle will

run you about \$14 or so in the liquor store, so Billingsgate obviously isn't going crazy with the markup. Being the soup junkie that I am, I start off with a small bowl of lobster bisque. The lovely orange mixture is described as having been prepared in the traditional French style, with cognac, cream and rich lobster broth. Topped with some finely chopped fresh parsley, it's incredibly flavourful. Rich yes, but it doesn't weigh me down at all, which is good because I have a pickarel fillet on the way. (Note: you can get a bigger portion of the bisque as a meal. I saw one come out of the kitchen. Huge.) "That's a good choice," the server tells me as I order the fish, prepared in a tangerine butter and served with green apple relish. The large, colourful plate features the northern Alberta pickarel, a side of rice and a medley of vegetables. Not just your cheap, run-of-the-mill veggies, either, but a mix of red pepper, snow peas, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots and squash. The pickarel is good and tender, the white meat flaking apart as you gently prod it with the fork. I'm missing something, though. And unfortunately, it doesn't dawn on me until later that there was no green apple relish on the side. Damn. It would've tasted great with the pickarel... which is probably why it appears on the menu in the first place, right? Still, I douse the fish with some lemon and it's just fine. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 11/13/03)

CUL-INA

9914-89 Ave • 437-5588

A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories like day dishes (cuLoina is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeines, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hotpot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at cuLoina means a mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange gin-

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DISH WEEKLY

ger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large, browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$5** (Reviewed 04/01/04)

DARIEN'S COCKTAILS AND FINE FOODS

5552 Calgary Trail South (Plaza 55) • 419-8675

Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they consist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiver. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, where-

upon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drumstick. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself. **Average Price: \$5** (Reviewed 03/04/04)

B2 BBQ AND NOODLE HOUSE

9118-82 Ave • 448-9988

With the growing tickle in my throat letting me know sickness would overtake me soon, I decided I needed a big, spicy bowl of some type of Asian soup. Steve had heard there was a new noodle house down Whyte—and it seemed like the perfect remedy to the evil brewing inside me. The menu is packed with all sorts of standard Chinese fare and it's too bad we're just a pair popping in for a quick bite because the BBQ duck dinner for four (at what seems like a reasonable \$65.75) looks tasty. Instead, we split a few dishes: the empire chicken, a BBQ pork chow mein and, to curb my spicy soup craving, a medium-sized bowl of the seafood hot and sour concoction. The

server brings me a huge pot of loose leaf jasmine tea, helping me soothe the irritation in my throat prior to the main event. The food arrives quickly, starting with the soup. This hot and sour version has your typical lotus and strands of thinly sliced Chinese mushrooms, along with peas, shredded carrots, calamari and baby shrimp in an ultra-thick, almost gelatinous broth. For the short while that the soup remained hot (temperature-wise), my throat feels much better. After getting through a bowl or two each, the empire chicken and the chow mein arrive. The former, served on a small, oval platter with breaded chicken chunks, mushrooms, green peppers, carrots, water chestnuts, baby corns and peanuts, is supposed to be spicy. (It had the little red chilis beside the name on the menu, for Crissakes.) It's good, yes, but provides little in the way of a kick. I have to be honest—I wasn't too impressed with the chow mein platter, either. The amount of BBQ pork amongst the bok choy and other veggies looks scant and upon further digging, we find our initial assessment to be correct. I did like the crunchy noodles, however, a nice contrast to the rest of the dish. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 01/08/04)

FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO

10154-82 Ave • 419-9604

You want brave? Try opening a restaurant a few weeks before Christmas, which is exactly what the owners of Flavours Modern Bistro have done on the famous Old Strathcona stretch. Sure, you get the Christmas push, but January is downtime for most establishments. Then again, there's a reason rentals on Whyte are so high: never-ending traffic. I walked into Flavours (kudos to them on the inclusion of the "u," by the way), the former location of the Bagel Tree, and was immediately impressed by the look of the swanky new spot, what with the cozy blue chairs, dark hardwood décor (both tables and floor) and the high ceiling complete with oddly-shaped alcoves on the walls. I have an intelligent, concise menu in front of me, offering a selection of salads, apps, "flavourwishes" and a few tasty-looking entrées (oh, and two varieties of eggs Benedict). I almost bite on the braised lamb shanks with a white bean and lentil ragout but I always

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DISH WEEKLY

get lamb, so I go instead for the chicken pancetta sandwich (sorry, flavourwich), featuring a grilled chicken breast, pancetta, smoked mozzarella with a roasted red pepper and garlic mayo on multi-grain bread. Basically, it's a high-end "club." In a fowl mood himself, Steve selects the five-pecan crusted chicken, a real earthy-looking dish that was served with a brown pommery mustard sauce. More people begin to file in and I decide that Flavours is a solid addition to Whyte's dining scene and not just because people are trudging along in minus-40 weather to get there. I can't think of many, if any, places on the strip that combine such an obvious level of sophistication with so little in the way of pretension and overly expensive items. The well-proportioned dishes top out at about \$16 or \$17 while the top price on the wine list is about \$40 or so, instead of a starting point. You could easily spend more for less. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 01/29/04)

IL PORTICO

10012-107 St • 424-0707

Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tantalizing apps like the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, corn-fed, free-range chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dress-

ing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, including prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are show-stoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish. **Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/26/04)

LEVA

11053-86 Ave • 433-LEVA

As soon as I walk into Leva, my eyes lock on the impressive-looking Sicilian cannolis behind the counter—I haven't seen old-school pastries like that in a long, long time. I instantly decide that after a relaxing, late afternoon bite, I'll be trying one. The main menu items are things like homemade thin-crust pizzas and tramezzini, which are grilled sandwiches. But I notice some unique items too, like the biscottis—lemon pistachio or anise-flavoured. Very cool. There's also a

nice array of imported beers and Italian wines, like the Nipozzano Chianti, a fantastic choice I've enjoyed on a few occasions. I go with the chicken pesto tramezzini and ask for a side of green bean salad. Antonio, the guy who seems to run the joint, tells me they're out, so I go for the potato salad. He says I'll like it. The tramezzini is incredible and I'll tell you why: I've had the chicken and pesto combo at other places and usually it's chicken loaf that comes with it. Not at Leva. Real, tender chicken breast, sliced thinly, combined with a tasty pesto and

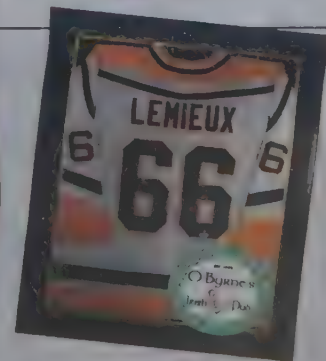
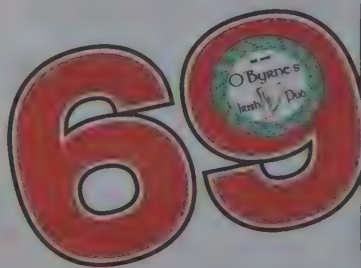
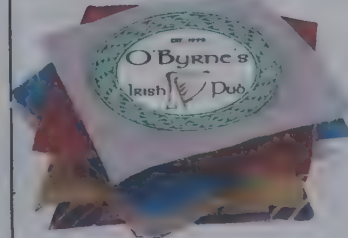
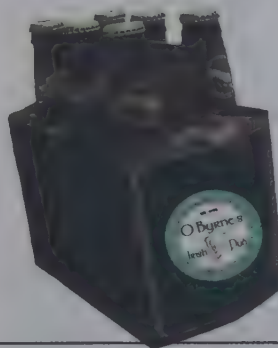
cheese. (I believe Antonio said it was Edam.) And the perfectly spherical scoop of potato salad is excellent—Antonio has left the skin on the potatoes, which I like, and he's mixed in a few artichokes too. He's also finished it all off with a drizzle of olive oil and some grated cheese on top. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 10/02/03)

MILL CREEK CAFE

9562-82 Ave • 439-5535

Other than a bevy of nice-looking sweets and baked goods, sandwiches are pretty much the order of the day at

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best dishes

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- Soups _____
- Salads _____
- Breads _____
- Steaks _____
- Venison _____
- Sushi _____
- Tapas _____
- Pub Food _____
- Dim Sum _____
- Sandwiches _____
- Hamburgers _____
- French Fries _____
- Wraps _____
- Pizza _____
- Desserts _____
- Chicken Wings _____
- Smoothies/Fruit Drink _____

best restaurants

- Breakfast _____
- Bakery _____
- Coffee/Tea Shop _____
- Deli _____
- Bavarian _____
- Greek _____
- French _____
- Italian/Pasta _____
- Chinese _____
- Thai _____
- Japanese _____
- East Indian/Tandoori _____
- Mexican/Latin American _____
- Steakhouse _____
- Seafood _____
- Vegetarian _____

other bests

- Sweets _____
- Snacks (pretzels, bagels) _____
- Pre-theatre dining _____
- Restaurant for lovers _____
- Innovative menu _____
- Wine list _____
- Beer list _____
- When you only have \$10 _____
- Best when someone else is paying _____
- Late night/all night _____
- Weekend brunch _____
- Best service _____
- Sports Bar _____
- Best Patio _____
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Entries must be received no later than 5 pm, May 14 2004

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Mill Creek Café. Kate orders the Montreal smoked meat sandwich, while I eventually get around to choosing the salmon salad. Then come the questions. "Swiss, cheddar or cream cheese?" the counter girl asks. Kate says Swiss, I say cream. "Tomato, cucumber and sprouts?" Yup. "Pickles?" Sure. "Hot, honey or Dijon mustard?" Kate says yes to the former and after a bit of deliberation, I pass, figuring there's no need to add mustard to the salmon. "Mayo and butter?" Neither. Mill Creek bakes everything fresh each day and as I attempt to wrap my mouth around the massive slices of grainy whole wheat bread with pieces of carrot in it, I think to myself that it looks awfully inviting. I had taken note of the fact that Kate asked for hot mustard and I patiently awaited her reaction. Sure enough, it came. "Whoa," she says after the first or second bite. It's actually really hot stuff—I try a nibble and some of the mustard actually burns a small nick on my lip. These sandwiches are huge and because baked goods are in our immediate future, we pack up the remainders and head back to the counter. This time, I'm only slightly more decisive—a piece of chocolate cherry loaf (a mere buck and change) and a slice of lemon meringue pie, though the chocolate peanut butter bars were crying out at me. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 12/04/03)

OVERTIME SOUTH Whitemud Crossing (4211-106 St) • 485-1717

I've been to the downtown Overtime in the past, but this version, once home to a Scruffy Murphy's, is definitely different. Sure, the numerous TVs and comfy little alcoves to relax in with friends are the same, and the Kevin Lowe paraphernalia is visible as a framed Team Canada jersey belonging to the Oil GM and part owner hangs at the bar. But other than the mini-humidor, the swank-o-meter hardly registers. No, this is a more proletarian crowd—couples, dudes in ballcaps and beer. Another thing that's different is the food. I recall a relatively in-depth, upscale bar-food menu at the downtown digs but Overtime South... Well, I'm pretty sure it's the old Scruffy's menu. There's your typical roadhouse fare of finger foods and sandwiches, with a Guinness pie and all-day Irish breakfast thrown in for good measure. I'm somewhat tempted by the latter, which has eggs, sausages, blood pudding, Irish soda bread and tomatoes, but I bail. The waitress lets us know that wings and mussels are on special and we end up trying some of each. We get a pound of medium wings, on for just \$3.50. "I like the sauce," Kate says of the plump wings. "It's buttery. And I like the mussels too." I agree. The wings actually have a good amount of meat on them, unlike many places that serve disgraceful, bony little things for their specials. Nothing at all wrong with the mussels either, as the white wine cream concoction has ample flavour and surprising the focaccia is good. Nowhere near the same neighbourhood as my mother's but light and airy nonetheless. We split the two ample pieces of fish and divv up the ultra-thin deep-fried potato slices that represent the "chips" half of the equation. I was a little unsure of things when I first walked into Overtime South.

It wasn't what I initially envisioned and the menu seemed like a step down from the original location. But you know what? The place is similar to the Oil throughout this courageous stretch drive in March—better than expected. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 03/25/04)

SANTA MARIA GORETTI COMMUNITY CENTRE 11050-90 St • 426-5026

I first heard of this decadent "pranzo" (brunch) through local food writers Judy Schultz and Mary Bailey, who included a nice blurb about chef Sergio Re's weekly gathering in The Food Lover's Trail Guide to Alberta. I've been dying to try it ever since. Seven courses—sounds intimidating, right? Not for me. I grew up with these types of meals. We start out with an antipasto plate. Despite the fact that Kate and I sit at a table alone, this initial platter, featuring fresh mortadella, capicollo, salami, cheese and marinated vegetables, is enough to feed a much bigger group. "This plate alone is worth \$15," says Kate, referring to the measly per-person price of the brunch. By the time course number two—a mix

of perfectly done calamari and baby shrimp in a rich sauce served over rice—arrives, I notice that the numbers in this gargantuan hall are increasing exponentially. I feel like I've crashed some big Italian wedding. The pasta course is on deck. A member of our service team tells us to flag him down whenever we're ready and moments after we give the nod, he returns with a big bowl of meat tortellini in a simple tomato sauce. I give mine a good dose of grated parm and a few shots of pepper but after a small second helping, even I am starting to lose the battle against my stomach. We figure a wine break is in order. I walk outside of the room to the hallway bar and buy a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon for a mere \$15. Sure, it's only noon on Sunday and I have soccer practice in two hours, but some deals simply can't be passed up. Three courses arrive all at once: roast beef and gravy, a fish dish (with accompanying potatoes and mixed vegetables) and a bowl of salad featuring greens, sliced tomatoes and shredded carrots tossed in a simple vinaigrette. The broiled sole fillets are tasty, especially with a splash of lemon.

Finally, there's just one course remaining. Our guy tells us that chocolate cake is the dessert this Sunday. Instinctively, I tell him that one slice will be fine to split and the kid makes me proud by suggesting that he'll ensure it's a big one. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/29/04)

SCHÄNK'S ATHLETIC CLUB 9927-178 St • 444-2125

"The thing I love about Schänks," my friend Steve says, "is that other than the track, there's not a bigger cavalcade of problem gamblers anywhere." How prophetic. Just as we sit down in front of one of the many massive TV screens with the game on (they have the sound up for the NFL tilt as opposed to the CFL playoff game, which in a way is too bad), I can't help but notice the freakshow going on one table over. The guy in question is wearing a leather tricoloured Miami Dolphins hat, his dirty jeans are wide open and his ample gut is hanging out, and in between nervously sipping coffee, hauling on cigarettes and choosing plays on his QB1 machine, he appears to be rubbing himself down, head included, with

a bottle of Absorbine Jr. But I'm more chuffed about the meager order of hot, boneless wings that we start out with. Nine bucks and there's nothing more than a handful of overdone, deep-fried chicken chunks with some hot sauce and a side of ranch. Luckily, one my superstars has already scored a touchdown so I'm in a good mood, just like the hardcore Canadian fans celebrating Saskatchewan's route of Winnipeg. The quality slightly improves with the next round of eats. I go with the peppercorn Jack burger, while Steve tries the spolumbo submarine sandwich. I haven't had a burger in a while, so it's a treat to sink into the big patty, which was seasoned with—get this—"course" pepper and a Jack Daniels barbecue sauce. I wonder for a second if the typo was on purpose. Nah. My mixed greens on the side have about as much spring as the Blue Bombers offence, but the crispy order of kettle chips makes up for it. The homemade chips are nice and hot, served with a bowl of a real spicy onion, cream cheese dip. It's definitely the "play of the day" in this highlight package. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 11/06/03)

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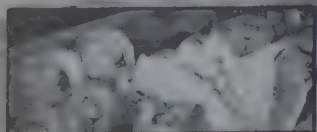
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SMOKEY JOE'S HICKORY SMOKEHOUSE

15135 Stony Plain Road @ 413-3379

I figure—er, I mean, I reckon—Smokey Joe's was conceived as a replica of old-fashioned prairie cuisine, or at least an homage to it. License plates from all over the continent dot the walls and the menu, bound in wood, has headings like "Samwiches" and "Young Un's Diners." The ranch theme is a little schmaltzy but for a guy soon to vacate the province, it's enough to bring a small tear to my eye. The coolest thing has to be the pink butcher paper they use for tablecloths—that's a nice touch. My comedic dining buddy Steve is along for this trail ride and he busts a gut when he spots the veggieburger on the menu. "I bet you it's never been ordered," he says. Well, neither of us are gonna be the first so instead, we put all our eggs in one high-cholesterol basket: the sampler for two. It includes, in no particular order, two roasted quarter chickens, pork ribs, turkey, ham, beef and two of Smokey Joe's famous ultra-hot wings. Oh, and garlic toast. "We're out of wings tonight so I'll give you another quarter chicken. Is that okay?" our host asks. Deal! You get your choice of three sides with the sampler so Steve and I agree on cornbread, beans and potato salad. I don't notice much green anywhere in the restaurant so we see no sense in having any on our plate. Back a century ago, a cowboy wouldn't have been clamouring for a side salad, right? I swear there's a strained look on our server's face as she lugs out the plate with what Steve refers to as "a pile of meat" on it. "There, go wild," she says. All of the homemade barbecue sauces are lined up in front of us—Smokey Joe's sells them on the premises, along a variety of the meats, including jerky—and it's time to get to work. On this snowy, frigid night, the platter gives me a much-needed dose of summertime. The spicy taste of the smoked meats, the richness of the beans and the creamy potato salad make me forget that it got dark at 4:30 p.m. that day. **Average Price: \$5-\$55** (Reviewed 12/11/03)

TROPICA MALAYSIAN CUISINE

6004-104 St @ 439-6699

As we meet up in the front entrance of Tropika and I'm amazed by how packed it is this jumping Friday night. I've been here before and I loved it—but that visit was quite some time ago. Years, in fact, and it seems Tropika's gotten a lot more popular since then. And why not? With the straw awning over the bar, the big woven chairs reserved for VIPs and the Hawaiian shirts on the waitstaff, it's like island party central in here. Before we even look at the tantalizing food menu, we giggle at the depth and variety of the drink list. Doctor Funk (and Doctor Funk's Sun, made with 151 rum), Bellini, Scorpion—they all look good. Birthday boy John finds his groove when he orders a Tropikolada, a drink that apparently comes from heaven. "You couldn't come up with anything that would make me happier," John says after slurping up the last bit of what one table member calls "an Orange Julius with alcohol." I figure food will make us even happier. Right out of the gate, we try some starters: a dozen satays (pork, beef, chicken and lamb), five Indonesian spring rolls and two bowls of Singapore Laska, a hearty soup with vermicelli noodles. The crunchy peanut sauce goes well with the satays and the spring rolls are incredibly neat, stuffed with pan-fried pork, Chinese mushrooms and shredded jicama, then deep-fried extra-crispy with peanuts on the outer shell. The Singapore Laska is a feast with shrimp, tofu and fish cakes all married together in a tasty broth. My favourite, however, is the Kari Lembu, a sensational dish of melt-in-your-mouth curry with beef. We also ordered something known as Nasi Goreng, a local recipe of Malay fried rice and a few delectable side dishes, including steamed spinach and Sambal Bunchies, firm green beans with prawns and Sambal sauce. While each of these creations rocks (very spicy stuff), the most memorable item is the Sayur Lemak hot pot, which comes to the table in a small kettle filled with vegetables and prawns simmered in a Malay coconut sauce. Oh, it was awesome, the broth so rich and colourful—by far the pièce de résistance. **Average Price: \$5** (Reviewed 10/09/03)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail @ 432-9153

True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins' "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

ZOCCA'S PIZZERIA

10807 Castledowns Road @ 473-6339

After a trek to the city's northernmost point (my cell's signal was gone), I walk in Zocca's to find a few old boys putting away some afternoon pitchers. I grab a seat at a small table just a small leap away from the claw machine and the parquet dance floor, which I'm certain is hopping on Saturdays (\$1.99 highballs for Ladies' Night). The specials sign reveals that you can get a \$50 bar tab for your birthday ("ask server for details," it reads) and I get sad when I realize I probably couldn't even drink enough anymore to use the damn thing up. I can eat, however, and I bypass all the baked loaves, pastas and parmigianis on the menu and go straight to the pizzas. They come in either medium or large and aside from the build-your-own options, there are also a few gourmet specialties: the Zorba (take a guess at the items on that one), the VIP (featuring a strange mix of salami and shrimp) and the Donair. I go for the medium Cajun chicken, which features red and green peppers, onions, mushrooms, a special Cajun spice and the diced chicken. Like one of the older gents sipping on his draft, I flip through the paper while I patiently wait. After a while, the barkeep/server pops by. "It's com-

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Fine and Andes

Atmospheric Chilean eatery is a beef lover's buried treasure

By DAVID DICENZO

One thing I notice right away about the decent-sized lunch crowd in **Los Andes Restaurant** is that many of the people seem to be regulars. And it's a diverse bunch too. From the labourer whose buddy is talking about almost losing his arm in some workplace accident to the man in a pinstripe suit flipping through the *Globe's* Report on Business, each gets the special personal treatment of a repeat patron.

Another fella just finishes his solo meal, ducks his head into the kitchen window and launches into a Spanish conversation with the chef. I don't understand squat but he ends

But the food ain't bad either. And the 20-item lunch menu gives you a few fantastic choices. One side is written up entirely in Spanish with the corresponding English explanation to the right. The carnivorous theme is evident from the lunch special (beef and rice for just \$5.95) right through to the *sopa del dia* (soup of the day), also beef. I give strong consideration to the *hamburguesa de pollo* (a chicken burger) but in the end, I happily decide on the *lomito* (\$4.50), a sandwich of thinly sliced pork with avocado. I also want the Los Andes salad

RESTAURANTS

and I'm pleased to find that I can get some on the side for a mere two dollars rather than ordering a whole one on its own.

The salad comes first. It's a simple mix of Romaine, tomato slices and a vinaigrette topped with some chopped cilantro but the lettuce is

even better by preparing the bread themselves. I mean, it's a helluva lot more representative of the culture than going to Safeway and picking up a few bags of kaisers, right?

AS I MOP UP every last crumb and piece of lettuce, my thoughts turn to servicing my sweet tooth. Los Andes has three choices (at lunch anyway): flan (I find that strange, for some reason), ice cream with strawberry topping and the *torta mil hojas*. Like the Spanish conversation I overheard earlier, I have no idea how to translate this. So I ask another question.

"How's the *torta*?"

The lady in charge simply kisses her fingers. Surprise, surprise, I'm sold. The large slice of cake (only three dollars, if you can believe it) features numerous flaky layers of pastry all held together by what initially resembles a peanut butter mixture. It's actually some type of ultra-sweet caramel and it's absolutely delicious. I live by the motto that

Los Andes makes a great sandwich even better by preparing the bread themselves. I mean, it's a helluva lot more representative of the culture than going to Safeway and picking up a few bags of kaisers, right?

it with "Gracias."

That I get. By the end of my meal, I'm just as thankful.

It's hard to imagine that a tiny joint tucked away in a southside industrial neighbourhood off 99 Street would have the abundance of charm this modest establishment does. Relatively speaking. Flags of Chile hang from the high ceiling and one entire wall is covered with a landscape mural of the very mountains that give the place its name. The colourful paintings depicting dancing and partying make you want to pay the South American country a visit, which I'm sure would be worth it based on the easy access to the robust Chilean red wines.

DISH WEEKLY

ing," she says. "These are thick pizzas." And she puts her two hands about three inches apart to give me an idea of what to expect. She's not kidding—the pie arrives on a stylish old serving tray and it looks more like a big quiche than your typical flat pizza, maybe even thicker than the server had claimed. The dough is moist on the interior but exceptionally crispy on the outside, just the way I like it. And the toppings are loaded on, from the chunky pieces of peppers to the hearty chunks of ultra-tender, spicy chicken. They put a layer of cheese over the top but not just a few loose strands of shredded mozzarella. This is a layer with uniform consistency, like getting the bottom of your car undercoated. It's a crust in itself and this pizza is one that most definitely requires utensils. The thought of sampling some three-for-one take-out crud after trying this gem just horrifies me. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/15/04)

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nothing is too sweet, though this comes close. I throw the whole thing down anyway, the tasty aftereffects remaining in my mouth for a few minutes afterward.

Perhaps best of all is that my bill comes to \$12. (Had I got myself a Chilean beer or a glass of sangria or two, that would've jacked the total up somewhat, but orange juice was good enough for me on this afternoon.) Given the quality of my simple lunch and the general atmosphere at Los Andes, I completely understand why the place was packed.

Muchas gracias. ●

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DIVISION



Ex-Pantera members never wanted to "turn their backs" on their fans

By STEVEN SANDOR

"Dimebag Darrell" Abbott and Vinnie Paul both enjoyed a reign of more than a decade at the top of the metal world. But after the rather messy breakup of Pantera, arguably the top metal act of the last decade, the pair found themselves not only nurturing a new act, Damageplan, but also facing a series of broadsides from former Pantera singer Phil Anselmo, who won't go gently into that good night.

Dimebag wants to set the record straight: while both he and Paul are buoyed by the early success of Damageplan's debut album, *New Found Power*, and the favourable reaction from metal fans across America in the first month of their tour, neither wanted Pantera to end the way it did—or end at all, for that matter.

"Vinnie's my best friend," says Dimebag. "I talk on the phone with him every day, if I don't see him every day or if I'm not drinking with him in the evening. We are a package deal, like Eddie and Alex [Van Halen]. We always thought that we would be in Pantera for life, but other people had other ideas and walked away. We tried to make it work as long as possible, but when we knew there was no hope to fixing it, we knew it was time to move on."

The last time the two were in Edmonton, they were part of a Pantera show at the AgriCom, which seats thousands. Now, with Damageplan, they're back to playing smaller theatres and clubs (although that isn't the case with all of their American dates). Is it like starting over? Darrell says there are pros and cons. "It's good in its own right. Obviously, the reason we got into this was to blow up and be able to pay the big arenas, to reach as many people as possible. On this tour,

we have played some big venues, some arenas, some 7,000- and 10,000-seaters. But there's something about playing the smaller places, when you can put a lot of energy into a small room and when we can read the emotion off of each other's faces, because we're actually standing close enough to each other to see each other."

FOR PAUL AND DIMEBAG, recruiting bass player Bob Zilla and singer Pat Lachman wasn't too tough. "Tattoo Bob," as Zilla is known, had been doing skin art on the Pantera guys for years, and was a natural choice to step into the rhythm section. As for Lachman, Dimebag knew him from a stint he did with Rob Halford's band.... "We

PREVIEW METAL

both knew we were in the same iffy situations with our bands," recalls Dimebag. "So when we started Damageplan I told him we were looking for a vocalist, he told me he could sing, even though that's not what he did with his band. So I gave him a CD and he came back a few days later and it blew us away. He's a great fit. There is no bullshit and no dope problem. He is someone who enjoys the lifestyle."

But while Dimebag believes that most Pantera fans perceive Damageplan as a "new" band and not a continuation of Pantera, he won't criticize anyone who still wears their Pantera shirts or wants to hear a nugget or two from *Cowboys From Hell* or *Reinventing the Steel*. "[The fans] see us as a whole different thing; we have fans that stuck by Pantera, and they've been very positive about Damageplan. We were a bit worried because some of the projects the other partners have done received a lot of criticism [like Anselmo's Superjoint Ritual]. But not for us. But we would never talk shit about Pantera; me and Vinnie wanted Pantera to last forever. So, when we're out meeting the fans and someone walks up to me wearing a Pantera shirt, I say, 'That's great.' And they tell me they have the Damageplan CD and I tell

them to come out to the show because we are going to blast it.

"We will blast them for about an hour and 10 minutes with Damageplan," he continues, "then Vinnie and myself will tell them that they've been fucking awesome for sticking with Pantera for all of these years. We will tell them we never wanted to turn their backs on them. And then we'll give them a couple of the oldies, but we'll do them up Damageplan-style."

WHILE DIMEBAG IS STILL considered one of the top guitarists on the planet, *New Found Power* was boosted by the guest appearance of Zakk Wylde, leader of the Black Label Society and former Ozzy right-hand man. (Wylde plays a lead solo on "Reborn" and adds vocals to "Soul Bleed.") But how did this marriage come about? Well, Wylde also writes for *Guitar World*, and he had met Dimebag to do a cover story. When Dimebag played Wylde some of the Damageplan demos—and after they'd shared a few drinks together—Wylde decided to add some of his own licks to the work. "He laid down three of the baddest leads and we ended up using number two," recalls Dimebag. "And we ended up getting so drunk that he missed his plane the next morning." With the extra time on his hands, he decided to lay down the vocal track.

Of course, you can't finish an interview with Dimebag without asking about the Dallas Stars. For years, the team was associated with Pantera—the Stars' 1999 Stanley Cup party was held at Paul's mansion. But things went wrong for the team this year—the Stars were bounced out of the playoffs in the first round.

"Maybe it's because we didn't party hard enough with those guys this year," Dimebag guffaws. "They kicked ass for most of the season, but sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do when things go sideways, clean things up—and hopefully we'll all be rubbing up the Cup at Vinnie's house next year."

DAMAGEPLAN
With Drowning Pool •
Starlite Room • Tue, May 11



Pool intentions

Jason Jones tries to keep his head above water with new Drowning Pool gig

By STEVEN SANDOR

After the sudden heart-attack death of singer Dave Williams in 2002, it would have been easy for Drowning Pool—at the time one of the most-talked-about acts on the modern metal scene—to pack it in. After all, much lesser tragedies have ended bands' careers. But after some serious soul-searching, the three remaining Drowning Pool members (bass player Stevie Benton, drummer Mike Luce and guitarist C.J. Pierce) decided that they would try and follow up the attention they attracted with their 2001 major-label debut, *Sinner*, and the buzz created by their appearances on the Ozzfest tour by continuing on with a new singer.

Enter Jason "Gong" Jones, who has not come into the fold to be a rock puppet à la *Rock Star*. In fact, Jones was responsible for all of the lyrical content on the brand-new *Desensitized*. Jones says that had the band asked him to be a good new member and listen to what they told him to do, he would have turned down the Drowning Pool gig. "I wouldn't have done this any other way," he says over the phone from Las Vegas. "I am not going to be involved in something where somebody else is controlling me. Everyone in the band expects that. For example, I don't tell Mike how to play drums."

So even though cynics might have expected Drowning Pool to make an album filled with songs about loss and tragedy, Jones simply wasn't going to allow it. Instead, the metal chugs along to songs like "Step Up"—which warns that if you want to make it to the top, you've got to take your lumps along the way—or "Numb," where Jones begs those who make public exhibitions out of their self-pity to simply go away.

Jones admits that "Numb" is

aimed at the legions of hard rock/metal bands who play the modern-sensitive guy card—something that Drowning Pool, despite the hard times that have befallen the band,

PREVIEW METAL

won't play. "I am fucking tired of hearing some 30-year-old guy whining about his parents," says Jones. "What I'm saying is that you're 30 years old—do something about it and

move out of your house. Just don't keep whining and singing about it."

JONES'S DISDAIN isn't reserved merely for the sensitive-rockers set; he also thinks that hard music has been sabotaged by "Green Day pussy-ass pop-punk shit"—and that both of these genres have made teens forget about why rock music came to be in the first place: to bring a little evil into our otherwise dull lives.

Considering that the album debuted at #17 on the *Billboard* charts, it would seem that not only have Drowning Pool's core fans embraced Jones as the new frontman, but DP has been able to grab new fans as well. "The guys in the band and the fans have really embraced me," Jones says. "Yes, it is a new chapter in the band's history, but of course, there will always be times when the other guys are still going to feel the loss of Dave. When Dave passed, if this would have been in the time of grunge, a couple of years would have gone by while the band figured out what they were going to do—and maybe the band's time would have passed. But the fans we have have been very loyal to this band, they have stuck with this band."

Still, Jones does admit that on the tour bus, the rest of the band still treats him the same way a pro team like the Oilers would treat a raw rookie. "They are always putting my shoes in the freezer," he laughs. "Don't leave anything outside of your bunk, because it'll disappear!"

DROWNING POOL

With *Damageplan* • The Starlite Room • Tue, May 11

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MUSIC



street vision

By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

Back in the battle again

The traditional MC battle can do wonders for rappers' careers. Not only can it give legitimacy to their lyrics and give new lustre to their reputation, but it also provides pages of bragging rights for future ammunition.

Usually, cash prizes in the hundreds (and, once in a rare while, thousands) are offered to the winner. But how much progression will an artist truly make if they spend the prize winnings

on beer and FUBU attire? On Friday, May 7 at the Joint, Urban Metropolis, Shady Clothing and Universal Music will be teaming up to host an MC battle with slightly higher stakes.

Eight of Edmonton's top wordsmiths, including local MC battle mainstays Neckbone, Touch, Max Prime and Kamage, are set to compete against each other in a tournament for an especially desirable grand prize—a feature spot on an upcoming Universal Music release to be distributed to record pools, radio stations and DJs nationwide. Naturally, the contestants will have to make it past an unforgiving club crowd and a panel of industry judges before claiming the throne.

Ivan Evidente, Universal Music Canada's national urban marketing manager, says similar promotions have been extremely successful in the past. Last year, the *Home Grown* EP gave invaluable exposure to a host of independent Canadian talent. "It's our job to know who the key tastemakers are," Evidente says. "Some of the indie artists might not know this information, and we have the opportunity to get the music in the right hands. It's also good for artists to get that feedback from the people who are moving and shaking in the industry."

Rikoshay, a Toronto-based MC featured on *Home Grown*, has gone on to have a video on MuchMusic, as well as music in rotation on Toronto's influential Flow 93.5. While Evidente admits the *Home Grown* exposure wasn't the only factor in Rikoshay's success, he says the EP did play its part.

Just as the *Home Grown* EP promotion was structured to support the release of

Scarface's *The Fix* album, this year's event is in being staged in conjunction with D12's recently released *D12 World*—prizes courtesy of Universal Urban, Shady Clothing and Needlworks? Entertainment will be given out throughout the night. The promotion is part of a national campaign held throughout April and May.

"It's a promotional tool," Evidente says. "I try not to look at it as a dollar value; I look at it as an exposure value. Anything that Universal Urban touches, we want to promote, and this is a great opportunity to promote yourself with major-label staff in the urban genre that specializes in getting your music out to the public."

Harman Brar, founder of Urban Metropolis Entertainment, says this is exactly the kind of promotion he's been looking for. Brar, who's often been criticized for his low level of community involvement, says he hopes this event will help establish communication between himself and Edmonton's local MCs. "More of the criticisms we get are on the concerts, which really isn't our say," Brar says. "The majors want demos submitted and their manager has to authorize openers. Either that, or it's a Gold Club show that we don't have control over. I even get squeezed out of my DJ gig half of the time."

Otherwise, Brar says, exposure is usually a matter of negotiating between himself and the artists, and when the right opportunity comes up, he uses Edmonton talent at his events. "I want to develop a relationship with these people first," Brar says. "I think that's the key, and this could be my first chance to do that." ●

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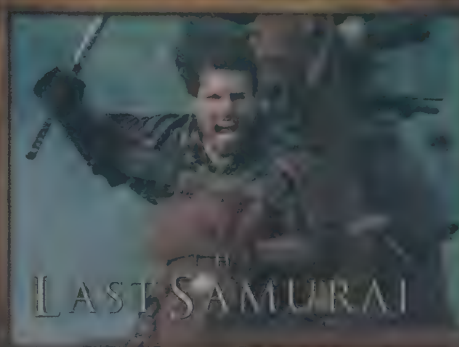
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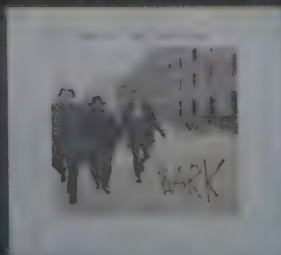


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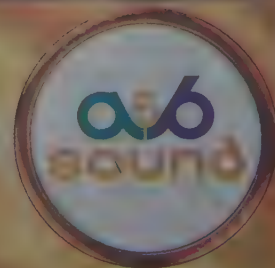
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MUSIC



music notes

By PHIL DUPERRON

Hipso factos

The Rickety Hips • With Nevertheless, the Johnsons, the Apartment Life and Powerman, "The World's Fattest Contortionist" • New City • Fri, May 7 Everyone knows Edmonton is home to some of the best country and punk bands around. But you can never have enough country-punk bands—which is why the Rickety Hips will be dusting off their cowboy hats and studded belts, taking a big ol' swig

of moonshine and throwing down a set of countrified punk tunes this Friday at New City. Culled from the cream of the local underground scene (bands like Les Tabernacles and Black Market Inc.) and masquerading as gap-toothed yokels with names like Jimmy Joe Bob and Shit Pickins, the Rickety Hips are a cover band like no other. The idea was dreamed up by guitarist Slim Jim-Bob. "He kinda masterminded the whole thing," says singer Clem Mottow Sr. "It was hashed out over a bottle of Jim Beam and a lot of go-pills one night."

The Rickety Hips take songs by SNFU, Wednesday Night Heroes, the Kasuals and even Jr. Gone Wild and give 'em a pickin' and strummin' makeover. "We're culling from the greats," says drummer Clarence Whirly-Bob. "Liven them up and put a little shit and polish on 'em and see what happens." While he admits it's just an excuse to get six guys onstage to have some "shits and giggles," the Hips do have a higher call-

ing. "More so than anything," Whirly-Bob says, "we're just putting the cunt back in country."

Burdocks on the wire

The Burdocks • With Aurora Copper and Immaculate Machine • Seedy's • Sat, May 8 Burdocks bassist/singer Christian Simmons doesn't know if he's lucky or not. All he knows is he lost at Rock Paper Scissors so it's his turn to talk to the press about the Burdocks' first ambitious blitz from their Nova Scotia home to Victoria and back again. And so, while the rest of the band tucks into their vegetarian breakfast, Simmons dishes out the dirt on *Airplane Tracks*, their latest release on Out of Touch Records. It's been doing well on campus radio across the country—including a 10-week stint at number one in Halifax—and they're justifiably proud of it. "We're really happy with how it's been received so far," says Simmons.

the Burdocks
with **Aurora Copper**
& **Immaculate Machine**



Saturday May 8th

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Friday May 7th
Vertical Struts
twin fangs **FAKE COPS**

FRIDAY MAY 14TH
the dudes
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Inside Edmonton's Wildest
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Learning to Hunt
Every Wednesday
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4300 170th St. S.E. (at 170th & 171st)
10-11 PM

While their first full-length disc, *I Have a Million Friends*, was all over the indie-rock map, *Airplane Tracks* boasts a more consistent, populist sound. "Basically," Simmons says, "it's just a collection of songs we felt were more positive, more upbeat songs than we're used to. A collection of more accessible songs." The band had a bunch of recording equipment left over from a project studio guitarist Seth Smith and drummer Sean MacGillivray had set up in a former Halifax all-ages club, so they recorded it themselves. However, because they're spread out across Nova Scotia they decided to record all the parts separately in several locations. "It was a collective effort," Simmons says, "with individual contributions."

Profile in courage

JFK and the Conspirators • With the Royal Winnipeg Porn Orchestra and DJ Mick Sleeper • Side-track Café • Sat, May 8 When Dave Adams (a.k.a. JFK) first got into music he played with some serious reggae players in his Winnipeg hometown. Even though they pushed him to get behind the microphone, the stigma of being a non-Jamaican singing the island's traditional beats was too daunting for him. Then he decided to try his hand at ska and formed JFK and the Conspirators in 1995. "I started off with ska," Adams says, "because at least white kids did it in England and it still had the black Jamaican feel that I liked." The band released *Mayor of Ganja City* on Canadian ska label Stomp Records in '98. It was well-received, but Adams was never happy with the disc and decided to call it quits and move to Montreal.

Montreal has a fertile music scene, but Adams couldn't find players who shared his fascination and dedication to the traditional ska and dancehall he loved so much. "I found it hard to actually find musicians who could see what I was doing," he says, "so I didn't really bother when I lived there. I just got some computer job and partied for a while." But he still had plenty of songs skanking around in his head waiting for an outlet and the band welcomed his return with open arms. "They were dying for me to come back," Adams says. "I took those same songs when I came back and tried them with the Conspirators and bang! Exactly what I wanted in my mind and I thought to myself, 'This is power. This is a powerful song.' That's why I had to come back."

Because Adams was burnt out on the whole music scene when he got home, he decided to treat the band as a hobby. But soon he hooked up with Bacteria Buffet Records for a series of killer gigs and the seeds for *Mash Up the Dance* were sown. After two years of slowly putting the pieces in place, the album was recorded in a sudden flurry of activity. "As soon as it started," Adams says, "it just became an obsession. The last three months here, the rest of my life has fallen apart because I couldn't do anything but finish this recording. It's ended up being something I really enjoyed. The end product is very similar to what I'd envisioned it to be."



Alexisonfire • Starlite Room • Mon, May 3 • reVUE Combining elements of hard core, emo and plain old high-energy rock, Alexisonfire delivered a three-alarm performance to a sold-out crowd at the Starlite Room. The band made the most of the massive new stage in the club, launching themselves around with wild abandon, only pausing long enough to press the flesh with their fans. It was absolutely amazing to see so many people downtown on a Monday night to catch some killer live music. And judging from the screams from the crowd (not to mention the volume of girls-size screaming) it was a damn good reason. *Alexisonfire* is available on CD and vinyl. Unless, that is, there were any Detroit fans in the room. The band took a short breather to announce the Calgary Flames' overtime victory over the Red Wings, which was greeted with even more howls of approval.

Boys in the hoods

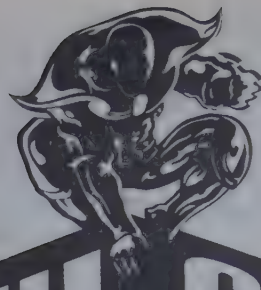
The Parkas • With Five O'Clock Charlie and National • Sidetrack Café • Tue, May 11 Many things have changed for the Parkas' latest cross-Canada tour. The Ontario pop foursome recently quit their day jobs to call the road home and maintain the momentum that *Now This Is Fighting*, their debut disc on Endearing Records, has been building since it came out last year. This time out, the disc, which has earned rave reviews and spots on numerous top 10 lists, will be distributed by MapleMusic/Universal, which means it'll be much easier for record-buyers to get their hands on it. "That's a huge thing for us," says bassist Mark Rhyno. "I think before when we went out, it was harder to find."

Although they wanted to keep touring nonstop, the logistics of navigating across Canada's sparsely populated landscape (not to mention the untimely demise of their touring van) stranded them in the Toronto area for the last few months. That doesn't mean they were sitting around idle, though. Short jaunts in a borrowed vehicle and a month-long residency at Toronto's venerable and storied El Mocambo, where huge acts like the Rolling Stones have played in the past, kept the band busy in the mean time. "I have a record, *Elvis Costello El Mocambo* that was recorded in '78," says Rhyno, "and of course being on that stage for me—because I'm such a fanatic of his—was nuts. I just talked about it constantly."

They won't be alone on this trip, either. Think Tank, a production duo, will be tagging along filming their every move to put together a documentary about life on the road with the Parkas. The filmmakers have already captured some shining moments of rock 'n' roll camaraderie... as well as some not-so-shining moments. "There has been some bad behaviour on tape, for sure," Rhyno says. "For which I think we'll all get spanked by our various parents and or loved ones when we get home."

Green party

On Wednesday, the organizers of the **Jazz City International Music Festival** organizers announced an incredibly diverse lineup of talent to mark the event's 25th anniversary. Legendary gospel singer Al Green will be making his first stop in Edmonton, the Aaron Neville Quintet featuring Charles Neville, Senator Tommy Banks and the sunny sounds of Calexico are some of the bigger names on the bill. But farther out on a limb are bands like Hungary's Besh o droM, a nine-piece electro-acoustic collective; N.O.M.A., led by Canadian trombonist Tom Walsh; flamenco guitarist Jesse Cook; and rising stars the Bad Plus. Everything from big ticket nights to free workshops and afternoon performances in public spaces around the city will keep folks hoppin' and boppin' for the whole festival, which runs from June 25 to July 4. Check out www.jazzcity.ca for complete details. ☉



www.newcitycompound.com
10081 Jasper Avenue
call 429-2582 for info

Friday May 7
Leith, Fat Dave & JFK's B-Day Bash
Nevertheless
The Rickety Hips

Featuring members of James T Kirks, Black Market Inc.
Open Wounds, Les Tabernacles, More Bad News & more...

Powermann
& guests TBA

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NEVERTHELESS




Friday May 14
New City's 7th
Anniversary
SNFU
Operators
Hills Have Eyes
Helvis!

Wed. May 19th
The Fat Possum Caravan Juke Joint Tour
T-Model Ford Kenny Brown
Spam Paul "Wine" Jones
Cedric Burnside [Son of R.L. Burnside]

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Friday May 28th
PILLOW TALK
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WEEKLY

WESTBURY THEATRE

"Fallen" by Roland Hung Directed By Karl Schreiner

At its surface this is a re-envisioned story of the angel Lucifer held in high regard by the Almighty, who eventually rises to challenge the sovereignty of God. Taking a story that is seemingly black and white and revealing that there is no such division. In a divided and war torn heaven, - an idealized utopia, - The Angel Lucifer rises to bring piece only to discover heaven is not what he has always believed it to be. Struggling to find himself in a psychological maelstrom, conflicted with what he has come to know and his desires. This post-modernist account of the ultimate battle between good and evil will leave the audience asking questions shattering any ideals of an absolute

"COSY Cabaret" Directed By Leah Anderson, Karl Schreiner

All their lives people have made promises - based around a specific event, that until now, we were all confident would never occur. Promises we have always believed would never have to be kept. Well, prepare yourself - This is a new day.... It's in every newspaper. It's all the talk on the street. Hide your children away. Hell HAS frozen over!!

"Dance COSY"

Featuring: Vanessa Young, Birkley Wisniewski, Teri Tien, Mike Kuroppo, George Brons, Corianne Brons, Kaelin Elliott, Katherine Lavoie, Vanessa Young, Erica Jacks, Carmen Poetschke, Abra Morrison, Anne Pringle, Ashley Johnson, Emma Brittain, Jaclyn Dang, Jade Pruden Doughty, Jennifer Macleod, Kristin Koehler

"Sea Saw" Directed By: Dorian Lang, Nicole Shafener

The tools of collective creation and structured improvisation have been used to construct this piece. The value of ensemble is at its finest as we work according to the energy and unique physicality which each of these performers provide. Much of what you will see is based on an image, layered with a loose structure of "beginning", "middle" and "end" as well as improvisation connecting the dots in between. The loose storyline is about a village of people who live in delicate balance with the nearby sea. With focus being on the moment at hand the performers use clowning techniques to create characters, relationships and action to bring this story to you

"Brigade Of Five" by Martin Villote Directed By: Adrian Lim

A group of Superhuman Teens are on the road, staving off an invasion of technological aliens. With the help of an independent division of agents they travel from city to city fighting the aliens. A sinister plot is uncovered and they work to keep Europe free from total assimilation, with the help of a new group of young heroes and an enigmatic enforcer from another world.

PCL STUDIO THEATRE

"24\7" by David Johnston Directed By: Samantha McCarthy

An average man, Adam Paultzer is signed up for a reality show without his permission. Isolated alone in a room for 3 weeks, his only interaction remains between himself, the host and a cameraman who is always present. Adam's morals, patience and understanding of himself are constantly challenged during this time. Through this ordeal he realizes his own views of reality are very different from those of society.

"Confessional" by Ian Younie Directed by: Josh Languedoc

The Past can often continue to alter our present way of life. Much like Aaron, whose past has changed his way of life and how he interacts with his friends, family and customers in the book store he works at. Enter Azzi, a young man who acts, as the catalyst to the unfolding of Aaron's past. In front of everybody important to him a new future is created.

"Illusions" by Angela Wight Directed By: Martin Villote

In a small town, two sisters are raised in the same house, yet brought up very differently. One to be a cultured intellectual; the other, a high society princess. When their lives are torn apart through tragedy the question arises: Which is stronger? Is Parental control stronger than the love between two sisters?

"In The Belly Of A Whale" by Jason Magee Directed By: Jason Magee

A modern retelling of the biblical tale of Jonah and the Whale, In The Belly Of A Whale is the story of four unfortunate tenants trapped in an elevator. A quarrelling couple, a timid bus driver and a brash young activist find that such a situation can be a little uncomfortable, a little aggravating and somewhat enlightening.

"Sex: The Play" by Nikoli Witschl Directed By: Ryan Steedman

In a brazen quest for sex, at the hands of a puppet master playwright six people realize that their world is not what it is supposed to be. With each page turned in the scrip, they must confront their pre-written fates head on.

www.theatresquared.com

499-1271

Ticket Prices:

Theatrical Extravaganza

PCL Studio Theatre: \$5 - Everyone

Westbury Theatre: \$8 - Adults / \$6 - Students and Seniors

Live & Loud Music Performances: \$6 - Everyone

Singer/Songwriter Performances: \$6 - Everyone

Passes:

Day Pass PCL STUDIO THEATRE - \$10

Day Pass WESTBURY THEATRE - \$15

Festival Pass (All Inclusive) - \$60

Play Reading Series: FREE

THEATRICAL EXTRAVAGANZA THEATRE FESTIVAL

Westbury Theatre • Trans Alta Arts Barns 10330-84 Ave.

Thursday, May 6	Friday, May 7	Sunday, May 9	Monday, May 10	Tuesday, May 11	Wednesday, May 12
7:00 PM COSY Cabaret	6:00 PM Sea Saw	3:00 PM Sea Saw	6:00 PM Brigade of Five	7:00 PM Fallen	7:00 Brigade of Five
9:30 PM Sea Saw	7:15 PM Fallen	4:15 PM Brigade of Five	8:00 PM Sea Saw	9:30 PM Brigade of Five	9:00 Fallen
	10:00 PM COSY Cabaret	6:15 PM Dance COSY	9:15 PM Dance COSY		
		8:15 PM Fallen			

PCL Studio Theatre • Trans Alta Arts Barns 10330-84 Ave.

Friday, May 7	Saturday, May 8	Sunday, May 9	Monday, May 10	Tuesday, May 11
7:15 PM 24/7		5:00 PM Confessional	7:00 PM Confessional	8:00 PM Sex: The Play
8:15 PM In The Belly Of A Whale		6:00 PM Illusions	8:00 PM Sex: The Play	7:00 PM 24/7
		7:00 PM Sex: The Play	9:00 PM Illusions	8:00 PM In The Belly Of A Whale
		8:30 PM In The Belly Of A Whale		
Wednesday, May 12	Thursday, May 13	Friday, May 14	Saturday, May 15	Sunday, May 16
7:00 PM 24/7	6:00 PM Confessional	6:00 PM Illusions	New Works Play Reading Series	New Works Play Reading Series
8:00 PM Confessional	7:00 PM Illusions	8:45 PM Confessional	7:00 PM Staged Readings	3:00 PM Staged Readings
9:00 PM Sex: The Play	8:00 PM 24/7	7:45 PM In The Belly Of A Whale	A Fling That Went Too Far Glass and Anvils An Interesting Threesome Untitled Work by Jason Magee	The Industry Untitled Work by Meags Fitzgerald Deadly Kisses Questions
	9:00 PM In The Belly Of A Whale			

LIVE & LOUD: EXPOSURE FEST

Westbury Theatre • Trans Alta Arts Barns 10330-84 Ave.

Friday, May 21	Saturday, May 22	Sunday, May 23	Monday, May 24
Blazing Violets And On Victimless Crime Rolodex Perfect Blue Rosetta Stone	Nathan Kidd Band Stillframe Sterile Pause HEADRUIN El Cid Portal The Drogues	Train to Hawaii Inverness Talk Box Brother Voodoo HEKNOTEKNO As Night Falls Last Time Around The Morellos The Degenerates	Naomi Carmack Warning Signs London Rogue AR Smorgasbord The Jephersons Resonance Past Midnight

SINGER / SONGWRITER MUSIC SERIES

B Scene Studio • 8212 104 St.

PCL Studio Theatre • Trans Alta Arts Barns 10330-84 Ave.

Friday, May 8 ("B" Scene Studios)	Saturday, May 15 (PCL Studio Theatre)	Sunday, May 16 (PCL Studio Theatre)
Shaun Robertson (Hard Belly's) Arsh Khaira David Ackerman	Cory Woodward Jeremy Nischuk Cody McLachlan	Michelle Knoblauch Kenton Thomas Potemkin Village

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3. Angelique Kidjo – Oyaya! (columbia)
4. The Wallin Jenny's – 40 Days (jericho beach)
5. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings – Bark (true north)
6. Franz Ferdinand – Franz Ferdinand (domino)
7. Loretta Lynn – Van Lear Rose (interscope)
8. Eric Clapton – Me & Mr. Johnson (reprise)
9. Eric Bibb, Rory Block & Maria Muldaur – Sisters & Brothers (telarc)
10. The George Bushes – Handsome (riverdale)
11. Harry Manx – West Eats Meat (dog my cat)
12. TV On The Radio – Desperate Youth, Blood Thirsty Babes (touch & go)
13. And One – Aggressor (metropolis)
14. Mae Moore & Lester Quitau – Oh My! (plant & garden)
15. D12 – D12 World (shady)
16. O.S.T. – The Triplets Of Belleville (virgin)
17. The Von Bondies – Pawn Shoppe Heart (sire)
18. Einsturzende Neubauten – Perpetuum Mobile (mute)
19. Livin' Lovin' Losin' – Songs Of The Lovin' Brothers (universal)
20. Blonde Redhead – Misery Is A Butterfly (4ad)
21. Sam Philips – A Boot & A Shoe (nonesuch)
22. Johnny Cash – The Man Comes Around (american)
23. Jolie Holland – Escondida (anti)
24. In Flames – Soundtrack To Your Escape (nuclear blast)
25. The Flatlanders – Wheels Of Fortune (new west)
26. Fractal Pattern – No Hope But Mt. Hope (method)
27. Madvillain – Madvillainy (stones throw)
28. The Postal Service – Give up (sub pop)
29. Descendents – Cool To Be You (fat)
30. Sigur Ros – Ba Ba Ti Ki Di Do (geffen)

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A BOOT AND A SHOE

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MUSIC WEEKLY

YOUR GUIDE TO LIVE MUSIC IN EDMONTON

Fax your free listings to #26 2888 or e-mail them to listings@wre.ab.ca Deadline is Friday at 3pm

THU LIVE MUSIC

WRECKED COUNTRY The Thin Harwell Pruden, 8pm

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GEL Jimmy Whiffen

BLUES CH WHITE Russell Jackson

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Party of Four (pop/country)

EDMONTON RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio, 4-7pm

COOR COUNTRY SALOON Battle of the Bands: Whittemud Drive, Leto, Stone Blind; 9pm; no cover

DUSTERS PUB Jam hosted by Black Ties

EDMONTON RESTAURANT J.J.'s Open stage with cover

J & B BAR AND GRILL Open stage hosted by the Poster Boys (blues/roots); 8-10pm-12:30am

NAKED CYBER CAFE Open stage

RATTLESHAKE SALOON Danni Tibbo

EDMONTON RESTAURANT Robert Clinton; 7pm (door), 7:30pm (performance)

EDMONTON RESTAURANT (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Dave Hiebert

EDMONTON RESTAURANT Tony Dixon

SIDETRACK CAFE Red Shag Carpet, Taki (tour lack off party); 9pm, \$8

SUGARBOWL Kevin Cook and the Lemon Boys; 9:30pm, \$5

URBAN LOUNGE Crush; no cover

YARDBIRD SUITE (LIVE) Lieberman Group; 7:30pm (door), 8pm (show), \$21 (member)/\$25 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

ZENARI'S Marco Claviera Trio

CLASSICAL

EDMONTON RESTAURANT (Piano), 8pm, \$15 (adult/senior)/\$10 (student); tickets available at TIX on the Square 427-1757

CAFÉ SELECT Bonnie Gregory and Rob Taylor (Celtic harp and guitar); 8:30-9pm

DUSTERS PUB Pound of Cure, 9:30pm

EXPRESSOZ CAFE Open stage hosted by Craig Shaler; 4-11pm

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FILTHY MCNASTY'S Punk Rock Bingo; with DJ S.W.A.G.

GAS PUMP Ladies Nite; Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI DJ Jeff

LONGRIDERS Hot Latin Nights, free dance lessons 8-9:30pm

NEW CITY LOUNGE Lounge Rub-A-Dub Thursday; rocksteady, dub reggae with DJ Jebus and the Operation Redaction Sound System

NEW CITY SUBURBS Progress electro/new wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests

RATTLESHAKE SALOON DJ Butter

RENEZVOUS Metal Night with DJ McNasty

THE ROOST Rotating shows Ladonna's Review, Sticky's open stage and the Weekend Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

RUM HIP hop Peter Rock & C. Smooth with DJ Kool

SAVOY Funk w/Boo Trampoline and Ben

THE STANDARD 3pm Thursday; house with Trappisch, Nestor Delano, and guests

WRECKED COUNTRY The Thin Harwell Pruden, 8pm

YARDBIRD SUITE (LIVE) Lieberman Group; 7:30pm (door), 8pm (show), \$21 (member)/\$25 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

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SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Dave Hiebert

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tony Dixon

SIDETRACK CAFE Luther Wright and the Wongs, Dave Lang and Tolan McKel, Alana Leavdolski; 9pm, \$10 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Crush; \$5

THE X WRECKS The Shuffhouse (blues/roots); 9pm-1am; no cover

YARDBIRD SUITE (LIVE) Lieberman Group; 7:30pm (door), 8pm (show), \$21 (member)/\$25 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

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MUSIC

The Nardest working man in show business

Nardwuar and the Evaporators don't plan to disappear from music scene

By JERED STUFFCO

Over the past decade or so, the man known as Nardwuar has conducted a veritable guerrilla war against the cult of celebrity. In the process, he's had his videotape smashed by Sebastian Bach, he's pissed off Beck and, oddly, befriended Courtney Love. (A full account of his exploits can be found on his website, www.nardwuar.com.) He's also been kicking out the jams with Vancouver's the Evaporators for nearly two decades, and as if to prove that age ain't nothing but a number, the band's new album *Ripple Rock* (Alternative Tentacles) is a punk-rock freakout of epic proportions. And this time around, they're taking the show on the road. *Vue* caught up with Nard at his Vancouver homebase to see what exactly is happening in the world of the Human Serviette.

Vue Weekly: You do so much work in the media. Are you ever concerned about your work in the media outshining the band?

Nardwuar: I don't care, actually. We started the Evaporators in 1986 and I got a show at [University of British Columbia campus radio station] CiTR in 1987, so I guess it's been going on so long and the two are so intertwined that I don't really



see any difference. Onstage, I'm yelling at the audience and when I do interviews, I'm yelling at bands—they're all part of the same thing.

VW: Would you consider your-

PREVIEW ROCK

self to be a self-promoter?

N: I consider myself to be do-it-yourself. In high school, I was president of the student council and I was in charge of getting bands to play gigs, and then it was time to get our own band. When I graduated from high school, I'd get other

bands like the Smugglers and the Gruesomes to play, and then it shifted from just being a vehicle for the Evaporators, to me just putting on gigs for everybody else. We'd do gigs with bands like Fugazi and Nomeansno and the Evaporators would open up. In 1987, I got my radio show and then I was like, "Why don't I put out a record?" So I started Nardwuar Records. It's all come really naturally.

VW: The new Evaporators record went to number one on the campus radio charts. How much of that do

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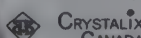
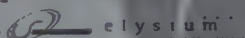
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classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

Checking out the competition

As much as we may talk about creating a kinder, gentler society and accommodating different learning styles in schools and providing alternative work environments, there's much to be said for competition, especially when it comes to classical music. Festivals such as the recent Kiwanis Music Festival are not just a chance for budding musicians to show what they can do. Festivals also offer scholarships and performance experience. Continuing study, necessary for anyone contemplating a career in classical music, is expensive, and money, mentors and name recognition are all vital.

The name of pianist Ian Parker will be familiar to many. He performs in Muttart Hall (Grant MacEwan College's Alberta College Campus) tonight (Thursday). The college's Conservatory of Music helps sponsor the music festival and offers participants the opportunity to hear Parker as well. The free concert is part of the Conservatory's *Resonance* concert series, made possible "through the generosity of the Muttart Foundation." On May 7, Muttart Hall will be alive with a different kind of sound, as the Edmonton Classical Guitar Society winds up its season with guests the Montreal Guitar Trio, billed as "the hottest guitar ensemble in Canada." May 12 and May 19 are other days of note for the Conservatory of Music. The first, *Conservatory Resonance at Winspear*, is a parade of the conservatory's brightest stars, both students and faculty, while the second, *Simple Gifts: A Spring Concert*, at McDougall United Church, focuses on the Schola Cantorum Choirs and the conservatory's various music ensembles.

Kiwanis festivals aren't the only

opportunities for musicians to test their abilities and try out for awards. Most Edmonton musical institutions hold competitions. For instance, the Edmonton Youth Orchestra and the Alberta Registered Music Teachers Association (ARMTA) hold an annual concerto competition. In 2004, there were three categories: voice, intermediate piano/organ and senior piano/organ. Two of the winners are soloists with the youth orchestra at Convocation Hall this month.

On May 9 at 3 p.m., Wendy Hui performs a Mozart piano concerto with the Intermediate Orchestra. The orchestra also plays ballet music from Mozart's *Idomeneo*, as well as works by Schubert, Bizet, Gluck and Tchaikovsky. A week later, Joey Mo, winner of the senior piano category, gets his turn. He plays the Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Senior Orchestra. Also on the program are Beethoven's *Egmont Overture* and the Shostakovich Symphony No. 12. Mo makes a habit of winning competitions in creative writing and boxing as well as music, and has been a finalist in the Canadian Music Competition. The winner of the voice category was Charlotte Burrows, who performed on March 5 at the West End Christian Reformed Church.

Next year, the 24th Northern Alberta Concerto Competition will be held on January 9, 2005. The categories will be senior strings, intermediate strings, and brass and woodwinds. In the meantime, the EYO is holding its yearly auditions, May 8 to 26, inclusive, in Room 123 of the University of Alberta's Fine Arts Building. The general manager for the orchestra is Eileen Lee, and music director Michael Massey conducts both orchestras.

A performer in his own right, Massey appeared as harpsichordist with the Canadian Chamber Orchestra on Thursday, April 29. That concert featured yet another engaging young Canadian violinist—Jasper Wood this time—and featured solos by Vivaldi and Andrzej Panufnik demonstrated the breadth of his repertoire. The concert series (Grzegorz Nowak's brainchild) has featured brilliant soloists throughout, though other elements have been less predictable. This time, the conductor himself was missing. ☐

with Heather Locklear.

VW: Is it true that Sloan walked out on you the first time you interviewed them?

N: This is it how it all ties together: the first time I interviewed Jello Biafra, he ran away from me. Fifteen years later, he's releasing our band. The first time I interviewed Sloan, they basically walked out on me. A few years later, our band was opening for them. It's amazing how things that start badly can turn out quite well in the end.

VW: Do ever get sick of being Nardwuar? Like, when people meet Jerry Seinfeld, they sometimes get disappointed when he's not hilarious.

N: I'll never get sick of doing interviews. I always love facts and I always love listening to music. No matter how old I get, I don't think I'll ever stop doing what I do. ☐

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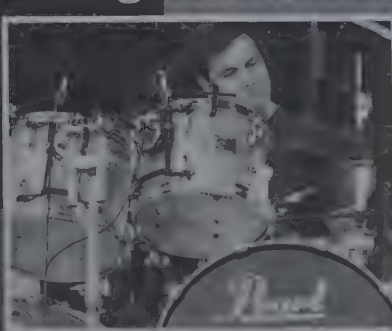
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you think was due to nepotism?

N: I don't know if it's nepotism at all—I've never played my own band and I've always tried to disassociate myself from that. Remember, I've been sending out records to college radio since 1989, so I think, finally, it just kinda clicked. One other reason I think it's clicked is that this is the first Evaporators release in a jewel box. So now we can compete with everybody else.

VW: Did you sell out when you went to MuchMusic?

N: I'm just a freelance contributor. It's my goal in life to get my own show. I've been harassing [Much] for 11 years, so I'm just grateful to have the opportunity to contribute. I'd like to sell out some more and get a giant show on Much. It's always been my goal to get a show on Much and to party poolside

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MUSIC



root down

By JENNY FENIAK

Lang initiation

Dave Lang • With Tolan McNeill, Luther Wright and the Wrongs and Alana Levandoski • Sidetrack Café • Fri, May 7 Dave Lang grew up as the ultimate army brat, and he's lived all over the place. That's why, after spending 12 years in Victoria, he didn't mind relocating to the Northwest Territories—or even Regina when his day job sent him there in 1999. He's still there today. "Regina's a good place to get work done," Lang says from his new prairie home town, where he's opened his own studio, Dave's Bar and Grill. "But it's a pretty small province with a pretty conservative music scene."

Not only does Lang help other musicians put their sounds into tangible packages, but he also recorded a split EP with Dave Taylor, with whom he later toured the country. (Taylor has just released his own full-length solo CD *Live and in Quonset*.)

Although Lang (who must not be confused with Yue's indispensable administrative assistant Dave Laing) appreciates Regina for what it has to offer, he does find himself pining occasionally—not so much for the place, but the people he left on the west coast and who he hooks up with whenever possible. Alt-country goddess Carolyn Mark, the folks from Red Cat Records and good buddies Garth Johnson and Tolan McNeil, who will be joining Lang on the long road west, are just a few of his favourite friends.

"They all have the same kind of sense of humour about music and they don't take themselves too seriously," Lang says, before explaining some of the one-off concept projects they threw together during their occasional reunions. A couple years ago, Lang and friends put together the Ladies of Rock; they assembled a girl's bedroom onstage for the gig, complete with a unicorn that spewed smoke from its horn, during their first "good girl" set, which featured songs made famous by women like the Go-Go's. The second "bad girl" set included songs by female rockers like Carole Pope and saw them using some black paint to turn the unicorn into a raging black stallion. "Whenever I try and talk about stuff like that with other musicians, they just kind



of look at me like, 'You're not going to get famous doing that,'" says Lang with an oh-so-anal intonation.

So Lang's been going it alone. It's more economical to work as a solo musician and he doesn't have to worry about party poopers. Instead, McNeil (who helped Lang record in Regina) is tagging along with his own brand-new solo disc, *There'll Always Be a Salesman*.

Super Greg

Greg MacPherson • With Tanyss Nixi and the Angry Mob and Division and Wellesley • Power Plant • Sat, May 8 Although Greg MacPherson insists all the army brats he knew growing up on Canadian bases went on to do stuff like join the RCMP, there's something about the nomadic lifestyle that seems ideal for a future solo musician. The 31-year-old songwriter now lives in Winnipeg, but he's sticking around with his woman in Toronto for as long as possible before he heads west himself this week.

"This whole month is my big anniversary tour and it coincides with the release of my record and stuff and it's May Day and Mayworks and all this kind of stuff too," says MacPherson, who's kicking off the celebrations in Winnipeg at the same venue where his first band performed exactly 10 years (and one day) earlier.

Maintenance is MacPherson's third record and his second to be released by the socially and politically active Winnipeg label G7 Welcoming Committee. "Ideologically, we have some similarities, for sure," explains MacPherson. "But I don't know about musically. I think I stick out like a sore thumb on the label. There's no one else really doing what I do. Like, the Weakerthens were on G7 and that's about as close as it got. Now it's, like, lots of metal and pretty hard-nosed stuff."

But MacPherson says G7's shit-disturbing reputation is probably misleading. "They're just good people," he says, "who want to try to make choices that are fair and just and, y'know, tread softly on the world."

Maintenance began with G7 asking MacPherson to record one of his most popular songs, "Company Store," a tribute to his grandfather, who used to work in the mines in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. MacPherson laid it down a few times at studios he encountered across the country along with a handful of other tunes he decided to keep. Meanwhile, MacPherson still plans to record another full-length CD this year—he'll get to work on that project in July. ☐

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bpm

By DAVID STONE

The in sounds from Way Out

At this year's Winter Music Conference in Miami, Pete Tong made an interesting observation. The British DJ and BBC Radio One personality, who was sitting on a panel about how the dance music scene was changing, noted, "The superstar DJ thing is leaving people a little lacking."

It's a good point. While the DJ is still an integral part of dance music—people will always enjoy dancing to a good set—watching someone cue up records and slide up a fader without so much as a hand wave can feel a bit long in the tooth. Unless you're someone like Bad Boy Bill, who can transform a turn at the decks into a pyrotechnic exhibition, rocking the wheels of steel also becomes less of a challenge for the ambitious DJ as time goes by.

Thanks to the growing popularity of programs like Reason and Live, the modest laptop has made music production affordable, flexible, intuitive and within reach of any DJ with the inclination. Last year, American producer and remixer BT took an Apple PowerBook and a small keyboard on the road, dubbing his club tour Laptop Symphony. It's not far from the truth, as he took his multi-layered progressive anthems and reinvented them on the fly with little more than a mouse click.

Of course, this could be as interesting to watch as data entry. Legend has it that British experimental artist Aphex Twin once took the idea to its logical extreme during a performance a few years ago, triggering samples on his computer while eating a sandwich. But injecting a live ele-

ment into dance music is proving to be stimulating for the artists and a unique experience for the audience.

Back in March, I was fortunate enough to hook up with some local musicians for a show down at Halo, where we bridged the gap between straight-up DJing and live performance, and it was a rocking party as a result. And this Wednesday at Escape Ultra Lounge, we'll get a chance to see it done by two of the best producers of progressive dance grooves on the planet, the duo known as **Way Out West**.

When Nick Warren and Jody Wisternoff hooked up in the early 1990s in their native Bristol, they walked into an interesting time in British dance music. Groups like Leftfield were defining a new brand of expansive, dub-inflected house and DJs were beginning to outdraw live bands. Yet the legacy of Manchester's late 1980s indie dance scene was still fresh in creative minds, and raver acts like Orbital, Altern 8 and the Chemical Brothers were beginning to perform their music live.

Through the 1990s, Way Out West released a number of excellent singles and brilliant remixes, beginning with their first album for Deconstruction. They took their second album, *Intensify*, over to the indie Distinctive Records first, then to Netwerk. The singles that came—"The Fall," "Mind Circus," "Stealth" and "Intensify"—flattered home listeners and clubbers alike with their intricate arrangements and diverse character. But both Warren and Wisternoff were still hauling out their record boxes for club appearances.

Coyly titling their forthcoming third record *Don't Look Now*, Warren and Wisternoff have expanded their vision further not only by adding a female vocalist, fellow Bristolite Omi, to the mix, they've packed up the laptop studio and thrown it into the record box for their live tour. This Wednesday at Escape, you'll not only be treated to DJ sets by Wisternoff, Warren and yours truly, but you'll get to see the music come to life during a live set featuring Omi.

Tickets for the show are available at Foosh, Sunkissed Tanning, Colourblind and Ticketmaster, and doors are at 8 p.m. ●

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Such was the impact of the dance music downturn of a couple years ago that Chris Fortier briefly entertained the idea of folding Fade Records and starting anew with another imprint. Fortunately for all of us, Fortier reconsidered—in fact, he prospered, thanks partly to his remixing an installment in John Digweed's Bedrock CD series, and Fade and Fortier remain American dance music institutions. With 40 releases over their 10 years in business, Fade's image got a facelift and its music has never been more vital, as this mixed selection of classics past and present capably demonstrates.

Fortier's brand of progressive music has always been less about a distinctive sound than a forward-thinking set of sensibilities. On *Audiotour*, you can hear material by Luigi and Blackwatch, Chris Micali, DJ Brian, Scott McFayden and the very talented DJ and producer Steve Porter. And with triumphant Fade productions (alongside Neil Kolo) like "So Good"

and "Separation" sitting alongside products of his own studio machinations like "Whateveritis," Fortier continues to be at the forefront of dance music excellence. ★★★★★ —YURI WUENISCH

RON SEXSMITH
RETRIEVER
(WEA)

I think one of the most mysteriously beautiful songs ever written is Irving Berlin's "Always." The lyrics ("I'll be loving you, always/With a love that's true, always") come across as hopelessly banal on paper, but with the addition of Berlin's deceptively simple melody, they suddenly seem extraordinarily tender and poignant.

Ron Sexsmith shares Berlin's ability to write plainspoken lyrics that, thanks to some unexplainable alchemy catalyzed by rich piano-and-guitar arrangements and his own bruised voice, pierce your heart nearly every time. Just take "Hard Bargain," the opening track to Sexsmith's latest collection of new songs, *Retriever*: "How's a guy supposed to

fail/With someone like you around?/I've tried, I've tried to no avail/You just can't seem to let me down/You drive a hard bargain." It sounds trite, but give it a listen and you'll think differently.

There's an uncharacteristic wealth of optimistic love songs on *Retriever*, including "Hard Bargain," "Tomorrow in Her Eyes" and "Happiness" ("I'm so in love with you/If this ain't happiness, baby, it'll do"). But halfway through the disc comes a stretch of songs where the sadness of world events becomes almost too much for Sexsmith to bear—"Wishing wells are fine in fairytales," he sings on "Wishing Wells," "but they've got no business here where evil's very real." *Retriever* suffers from a few too many so-so songs, but it's hard not to be moved by the way Sexsmith emerges from his fog of doubt at the end of the disc. "I hope tomorrow is clearer than today," he sings. "Though in your house sorrow dwells/It never stays/I know it well." *Retriever* could chase the sorrow away from any house. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

JOHNNY CASH
MY MOTHER'S HYMN BOOK
(AMERICAN/UNIVERSAL)

The greatest songwriter in American history (and, no that's not even close to being an overstatement) had some unfinished business to complete. Despite failing health and a heart heavy from the loss of June Carter, Cash completed a solo acoustic record which saw him retrace the deeply religious music that played such a role in his early Arkansas years.

My Mother's Hymn Book is a fitting final musical card from the late Man in Black, because, despite all the turmoil Cash was going through, he managed to put together a collection of songs that are about hope, not despair. Yes, as accompanied by only his acoustic guitar in the studio, it's easy to hear the pain in Cash's voice—and there's no doubt that this was music recorded by a man who knew the time he had left in this world was short. But maybe that's what makes this effort all the more uplifting—it's a final reminder from Cash that we should always look on the bright side.

And whether you're a religious person or not, there's something awfully inspiring about Cash's devotion to his southern evangelical beliefs; *My Mother's Hymn Book* is proof that Cash, right to the bitter end, wanted to be seen as nothing more than an honest musical performer. Rest in peace, Johnny. ★★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

LORETTA LYNN
VAN LEAR ROSE
(INTERSCOPE)

You can certainly hear producer/arranger Jack White's none-too-subtle touch on this record, an amazing collection of stripped-down, visceral country tracks and balls-out rockers. Yup, Loretta Lynn + Jack White = Balls Out. In fact, they should have called this album *Balls Out* and put a picture of Loretta riding a huge pair of iron balls AC/DC style, hanging from the crotch of an old plantation oak on the cover. POW!

Anyway, this is an amazing artistic leap forward for Lynn and White. Both

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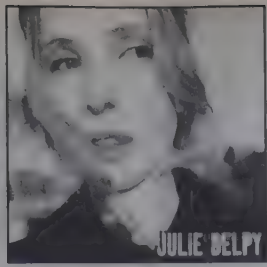
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benefit from the collaboration and become that much cooler by association. This isn't *Ass Cobra*, but it's as raw and emotive as Loretta Lynn has ever been, with White's ragged production perfectly framing some of her finest songwriting to date. The old-timey country ballads like "Trouble on the Line" and "Van Lear Rose" ring true with Lynn's resilient voice front and centre, soaring over the obligatory tear-inducing pedal steel, while uptempo numbers like "Have Mercy" and "Mrs. Leroy Brown" show that Loretta's still got some spring in her reverberant. Just as Rick Rubin rejuvenated (and generated plenty of) Cash back in the '90s, White is breathing new life into Lynn's career. Let's hope the country legend/rock producer template flourishes. I can hardly wait for a Wayne Coyne/Kenny Rogers collaboration. ★★★★★ —WHITEY HOUSTON

JULIE DELPY
JULIE DELPY
(PIAS)

I nearly got into a wrestling match with Quick Spins reviewer T.B. Player over which of us would get to review this disc, the recording debut of actress Julie Delpy. Who knew T.B. was such a fan of French cinema? Maybe it was her work in Jean-Luc Godard's *Detective*

that first alerted him to her talents, or could it possibly have been her memorable turns in Agnieszka Holland's *Europa Europa* or Krzysztof Kieslowski's *White*? Or maybe he was like me and didn't really swoon over her until *Before Sunrise* made him think, "Hey, if even greasy ol' Ethan Hawke can get her to spend the day with him, maybe I've got a chance too!" Or maybe T.B. just never got over her racy topless scene in *An American Werewolf in Paris*.

Sadly, I doubt whether Julie will win herself any ardent new admirers with this disc, an exercise in "personal" songwriting that nevertheless sounds like dozens of other albums on the market already. Delpy loves writing autobiographical-sounding songs about one-night stands, extramarital affairs and relationships with bastard boyfriends, but for such a sensuous actress, she's surprisingly unconvincing at conveying the passionate emotions that surround those kind of experiences—one of the songs is even called "Something a Bit Vague." (One of Delpy's inspirations seems to be Alanis Morissette's *Jagged Little Pill*; this is more like *Jagged Little Placebo*.) Sorry to break it to you, T.B., but this was an empty victory. What say we make up by opening a couple of beers and watching *Killing Zoe* together sometime? ★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY
HANGOVER MUSIC VOL. VI
(SPITFIRE)

Zakk Wylde has got the blues. Ozzy's former guitar impresario has decided that people who are hung over like their music to hit them gently, with lots of slide guitar. Flying in the face of earlier efforts, Wylde and his BLS mates have blended hard rock with the blues into a mix that sounds at times like a poor man's Alice in Chains (think "Rooster") or, at best, any basic electric blues cover band you'd see at the Commercial Hotel.

Of course, Wylde isn't about to let this change in musical gears prevent him from using his most powerful means of expression, the guitar solo. And it's not like Wylde would let his solos adjust to the blues form—instead, *Hangover Music* is full-on, straight-out-of-the-'80s metal with all the necessary hammer-ons.

But heck, when you're a heavy metal god, you can do what you want, right? And that includes Wylde's puzzling decision to do a piano-man cover of Procol Harum's "Whiter Shade of Pale" and to wrap up the album with a couple of needless power ballads. Heavy it's not, but the twin skulls on the CD guarantee that this will be the most-talked about coaster I've ever owned. ★ —STEVEN SANDOR

QUICK SPINS BY WHITEY AND T.B. PLAYER

Múm
Summer Make Good (Fatcat)
Handle like eggs! What a tender surprise the new Múm album turns out to be. I didn't think they could offer up anything more precious, delicate and moving than *Finally We Are No One*, but they've outdone themselves with this new longplayer. An orchestral, sweeping tapestry that Sigur Rós fans are sure to love.

Fin Hånda
No Hands (Independent)
Wow! This li'l four-song EP is simply stunning! Every sentence shall end with an exclamation point! Seriously! Knife fight guitars, spastic blitz drumming and 11 minutes of the finest rock this dump town has ever produced! Jeepers!

Doc and Merle Watson
Sittin' Here Pickin' the Blues (Rounder)
An old-timey, good-timey strumfest from two finger-pickin' masters.

Various Artists
Bluegrass Number 1's: A Collection of Chart-Topping Songs (Rounder)
Whenever we would put one of these bluegrass compilations in for a spin, someone would inevitably poke their head into the production room; say, "You shur got a purdy mouth," then shuffle off chuckling to the candy machine. Guess what, lardass? You are *NOT* RUNNY! It's a testament to the soothing goodness of these discs that they more than made up for having to suffer through an endless tirade of cousin-pokin' quips.

J.W. Jones Blues Band
My Kind of Evil (Northern Blues)
The cursive font on the cover makes it look like this album is by "HIV Jones," which we thought would be a pretty outrageous handle. But we doubt HIV Jones would stoop to pumping out lame Blueshammer swing fizzlers or get Colin James to sing his songs. Nope! HIV Jones would write songs about fucking in the streets and sausages and shit.

Sweatpant Superstars
Two Cans and a String (Buttertubs)
Entertaining in an Organized Rhyme kind of way, annoying in a Tom Green kind of way. Just blah enough to make me not really care either way.

Weezer
Weezer (Deluxe Edition) (Geffen)
Disc one is the old blue record. You know it well, so we won't blow anymore sunshine up Mr. Cuomo's ass. Disc two, however, is a whole bunch of fun crazy crap. Some of this stuff has been available online for awhile now and a lot of the other tracks are either live or demo quality, but it's nice to have them all in one package.

Various Artists
American Idol Season 3: Greatest Soul Classics (RCA/BMG)
Rumour has it that if you play this record backwards, Simon Cowell will appear, make fun of you to your face, dance an evil jig upon all your old Marvin Gaye records and piss all over your living room carpet. Still, it's better than playing it the right way.

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Coup romance

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised is a fatally partisan portrait of Hugo Chavez

BY CHRIS BOUTET

When Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez was forcibly (and temporarily) removed from office on April 11, 2002, it was difficult, if not impossible, for interested North Americans to see the big picture behind the coup. Amid images of gunfire and riots, we were told that Chavez had ordered snipers to fire on an opposition demonstration, killing 11 people; in the wake of this order, he had been forced to

resign. Of course, many people were skeptical of the overthrow, and the common feeling was that the CIA had orchestrated Chavez's ouster—a suspicion aroused by the fact that Venezuela is the third-largest supplier of oil to the U.S. and Chavez was promising to take the country's oil wealth out of the hands of the country's elite and redistribute it amongst the other 80 per cent of the population that lives in poverty.

Whether or not the CIA was in fact involved in the coup is a question that *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* fails to answer, and sadly, it's not the only aspect of the documentary's source material that goes curiously unaddressed. While the film does provide some truly spectacular footage taken directly within the thick of this historical

moment as it happened, those looking for a more balanced and complete account of the Chavez government's history and the issues surrounding the coup will undoubtedly be left feeling the same way they did when they watched it happen on CNN: this is only half the story.

The portrait painted here by Irish filmmakers Kim Bartley and Donnacha Ó Briain is one of a benevolent humanitarian's triumph over the evils of capitalism and greed; Chavez is a man of the people, a friend to the poor, a Bolivarian revolutionary who, tired of the fetid stench of corruption and greed that is impoverishing his people, seeks to redistribute the wealth of his country and re-engage the less fortunate in the democratic process. Venezuela's wealthy elite, however,

loathes Chavez, fearing that his program of redistribution is just thinly veiled communism, a path that some are concerned will lead Venezuela to the same fate as Cuba. As such, a coup is planned, organized and exacted with positive results: Chavez is captured and detained while a repressive and undemocratic "interim" government is imposed on the country. This new government, though, is rejected by Venezuela's poor, and a counter-coup is staged which successfully restores Chavez to power. In the end, democracy wins, and the revolution does indeed get televised.

ON THE PLUS SIDE, the documentarians deserve more than ample credit for their amazing ability to

REVIEW DOCUMENTARY

always be in the right place at exactly the right time. When anti-Chavez protesters storm the presidential palace, when unseen and unidentified snipers open fire on the crowd, when the military takes Chavez away and when the Chavez government is again reinstated, the camera is right there in the crowds, in the palace, in the deserted streets, providing unprecedented fly-on-the-wall footage of the event as it happened, when it happened. But at the same time, their insider status is the film's main flaw: with such total access to Chavez and the revolution's ground zero, one can't help but feel that Chavez's cooperation with the filmmakers was predicated on the contingency that he would be portrayed in a positive light. But perhaps "positive" is even too mild a word to describe the film's portrayal; "unrelentingly glowing" would be

far more apt—so much so, in fact, that the film has been dismissed in many circles as little more than propaganda.

The Chavez we are given is a man of the people, hated by the elite and revered by the poor, a defender of freedoms and open debate, but a quick visit to the Human Rights Watch website (www.hrw.org) tells a very different story. According to HRW reports, Chavez has publicly threatened to shut down media that was critical of his presidency, his National Assembly even debating a bill in May 2003 that would severely restrict the freedom of the opposition press. As well, it is reported that between October 2002 and September 2003, more than 130 people were extrajudicially executed by Chavez's military police with little to no repercussion from the country's legal system. Indeed, Chavez is hardly the angel that is presented here, and while he certainly does have his good side, the almost-criminal omission of these facts makes the film as a whole pretty difficult to swallow.

The cinematic achievements of *Revolution* are clear, as it offers an incredibly rare behind-the-scenes look at a revolution in the making. But that said, it's clear that in order to obtain the presence they sought, the filmmakers had to give Chavez something in return. What they've given him (and us) is a disappointingly one-sided and manipulative pseudo-documentary that will undoubtedly require a moon-sized grain of salt to wash it all down. ●

THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVIEWED

Directed by Kim Bartley and Donnacha Ó Briain • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri, May 7 (9pm); Sat-Wed, May 8-12 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

The carpenter's apprentice

The Son's placid surface and taciturn hero conceals enormous emotional depths

BY JOSEF BRAUN

Olivier teaches carpentry to kids. A reserved, rather terse man with small, hard eyes who dresses in utilitarian clothing, he seems every bit your weirdo high-school shop teacher. His attention—make that devotion—to pragmatics and precision is such that he's able to accurately estimate short distances by eye, without the use of a measuring tape. Yet precise distance is also exactly what he keeps between himself and those he comes into contact with. From an adult's perspective, it's clear that encased in this guy is something more than meets the eye, something vigilantly protected by his seemingly impenetrable armour.

All throughout *The Son*, the camera stays very close to Olivier, observing his every subtle shift of expression, blink, breath or muscu-

lar tic in lieu of his lack of words. Peeking clandestinely around corners, chasing after his ex-wife and paying a great deal of attention to one particular blond teenage boy who's just been placed under his wing, his actions at first seem all too sinister, and a sick feeling creeps in as we study his pensive exterior and attempt to deduce what potential dementia lies beneath it. But with

REVIEW FOREIGN

time, his real purpose and chaotic emotional landscape becomes clear, and this disarmingly sincere film's themes of forgiveness, faith, grief and transformation begin to filter in and change everything.

Writer/directors Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, the Belgian brothers whose *Rosetta* received the Palme d'Or and divided audiences and critics alike a few years back, display a marvelous sense of pace and sensitivity here. This is clear-minded, rigorous craftsmanship that pays off. Their confidence in their stark narrative and its moral force empowers *The Son*—this is very much a movie that would fall utterly flat if

the filmmakers waffled or tried to openly woo or tease their viewers.

YET JADED OR IMPATIENT filmgoers may understandably find the Dardenne's approach a bit coy or withholding. I think your own response will depend largely on whether or not you can accept the film's long-simmering revelation as a resolution that's complete and satisfying in itself and not simply an abrupt end to an overdeliberate trail of breadcrumbs. (A second viewing might help alleviate this feeling.) It's important to surrender to the film's documentary-like *mise-en-scène*: the camera may spend a conspicuous amount of time trailing after Olivier, and we may see more of the back of his head than seems completely necessary, but stick with it. Most importantly, stick with Olivier Gourmet, the Dardenne's frequent collaborator who plays Olivier—Gourmet's an actor who thinks on camera extremely well, is never opaque yet maintains an engrossing sense of mystery. A painful, uncanny twist of fate sets a fire in Olivier and Gourmet, doing



Olivier Gourmet in *The Son*

so much with so little, allows us to watch the fire burn and build even when we don't understand what caused it in the first place.

Images of male bonding dominate *The Son*: guys building stuff, driving, learning to appreciate the feel of raw materials, understanding the importance of discipline, doing sit-ups or playing foosball. Those are the nuts and bolts of the movie. But these images are underscored by layers of poignancy and violence that only reveal themselves gradually. (Whether or not they shock you is neither here nor there as far as I'm concerned.) In other hands, this

intermingling of muscle and message could come off as manipulative, sentimental building-as-maturing shtick (à la the tiresome and formulaic youth alienation flick *Life As a House*), but what's at stake here is far more complex and grave—and it's handled with delicacy and, when all is said and done, rare directness. ●

THE SON

Written and directed by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne • Starring Olivier Gourmet, Morgan Marinne and Isabella Soupant • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Sat-Wed, May 8-12 (8:30pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

Bands of outsiders

Unjustly cancelled
Freaks and Geeks
series finds new life
on lavish DVD

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

It seems as though there was only one person who watched the 1999 NBC TV series *Freaks and Geeks* and didn't absolutely adore it. Unfortunately, that person was Garth Ancier, the programming director at NBC.

With its unconventional blend of comedy and drama, its cast of defiantly ordinary-looking actors, the often downbeat endings to many of its episodes and its uncanny ability to evoke the pain and awkwardness of adolescence, *Freaks and Geeks* was unconventional network TV fare right from the get-go, and it seemed especially out of step with squeaky-clean NBC shows like *Friends*, *Suddenly Susan* and *Veronica's Closet*. But Fox was doing well with its new hourlong comedy/drama *Ally McBeal* and NBC, encouraged by the wonderfully funny and moving pilot episode written by creator Paul Feig and directed by *Zero Effect's* Jake Kasdan, gave the show a chance (although its truly lousy 8 p.m.

Saturday timeslot is the TV equivalent of getting picked last in gym class).

That pilot episode begins with a famous shot that perfectly captures the tone of the 18 episodes that would follow. We open on a pretty blonde cheerleader and a handsome quarterback sitting on the bleachers at their high school football field, making banal small talk and tenderly kissing—and then, just when we think we're in for a clone of *Dawson's Creek*, the camera plunges under-

REVIEW DVD

neath the bleachers and zooms in on a group of pot-smoking "freaks" raving about John Bonham. After a few moments, the camera pans over to a group of scrawny, geeky friends competing to see who can do the best imitation of Bill Murray in *Caddyshack*. Our heroes! "I wanted [the show] to be about the real people I knew," Feig has said, "the people I had never seen portrayed accurately on TV or in movies."

Unfortunately, Feig and co-producer Judd Apatow (*The Larry Sanders Show*) were opposed by Ancier, who essentially wanted the show to remain up on the bleachers with the cheerleaders and the jocks. He believed teen

dramas should be about happy endings and "wish fulfillment," and never understood Feig and Apatow's argument that for their characters, merely surviving all the horrible, embarrassing experiences of high school with their sense of humour and dignity intact was a happy ending. Guess who won out—the show was cancelled after 12 episodes, but in the meantime it inspired a fanbase so devoted that a jam-packed new DVD collection of the complete series is now widely available in stores. It's a must-have, probably one of the most insanely completist DVD packages ever created. And I can't think of another movie or TV program that has captured the high school experience with as much warmth, humour and humanity as *Freaks and Geeks*. Every episode is so truthful it makes you cry.

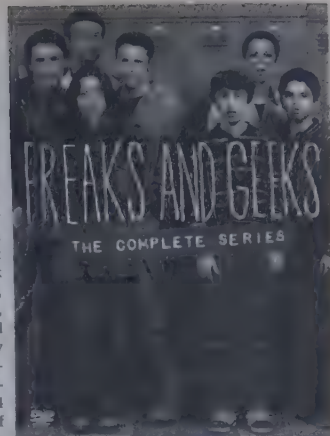
THE SHOW REVOLVED around siblings Lindsay and Sam Weir, both students at William McKinley High School in Michigan in 1980. Lindsay (Linda Cardellini) is a straight-A student who, sensing there's more to life than studying and competing in "mathlete" tournaments, starts hanging out with a clique of so-called burnouts and losers. Her kid brother Sam (John Francis Daley), meanwhile, feels perfectly at home with his circle

of socially awkward friends, although he does often cast longing glances at Cindy Sanders, the pretty, popular cheerleader he has a crush on. But right from the first episode, the show set to work creating a huge cast of fresh, beautifully layered characters, from the emotionally bruised "tough chick" Kim Kelly (Busy Philipps) to Sam's mouth-breathing friend Bill Haverchuck (Martin Starr, who at 14 was already some kind of comic genius—everything this kid does, from smiling for his yearbook photo in the show's opening credits to dressing up for Halloween as the Bionic Woman, is absolutely

hilarious).

So many TV shows and movies

SEE PAGE 42



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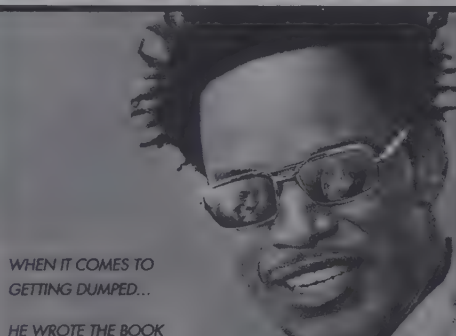


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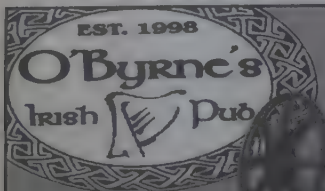
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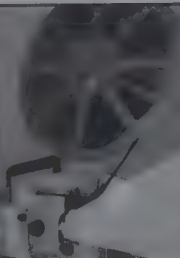
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Golden Globe-
winning *Osama*
brings its anti-Taliban
message to DVD

BY JOSEF BRAUN

Though produced under the auspices of legendary Iranian filmmaker Moshen Makhmalbaf's production house, Afghan writer/director Siddiq Barmak's debut feature *Osama* is a movie that's, comparatively speaking, much more in keeping with the sensibilities of the modern West than the Middle East. The tale of a 12-year-old girl's attempts to survive amidst the imposed poverty and absurd restrictions of the Taliban, Barmak's cinema is one of clear, overt

REVIEW DVD

politics (which, given the content, isn't surprising) and broad, highly orchestrated beauty. That combination gives *Osama* a far more commercial edge than anything Makhmalbaf (the uncharacteristic Kandahar aside) or Abbas Kiarostami have ever produced. Yet despite these elements and a Golden Globe for Best Foreign Film to boot, *Osama* never played Edmonton cinemas and is only now available on DVD.

Of course it's unfair to lump *Osama* in with the works of the Iranian masters—those filmmakers reinvented cinema, and Afghanistan has its own cultural legacy to nurture in the wake of seemingly endless, if not ongoing, upheaval (and it's worth noting that the Afghan government itself put up a great deal of the funding). But the links between these countries and their artists are many, and the distinctions curious.

The heroine of *Osama*, played by Marina Golbahari, doesn't make many choices on her own: it is her mother who decides to cut off her hair and have her pass as a boy in order to find work since women are forbidden to do so. But the girl is quickly corralled along with hundreds of boys in her village for Taliban training and, combined with her unconvincing gender swapping, the uncovering of her disguise becomes dreadfully inevitable.

The idea of a girl dressing in drag to work within a repressive Islamic community was used quite recently in Majid Majidi's *Baran*, another example

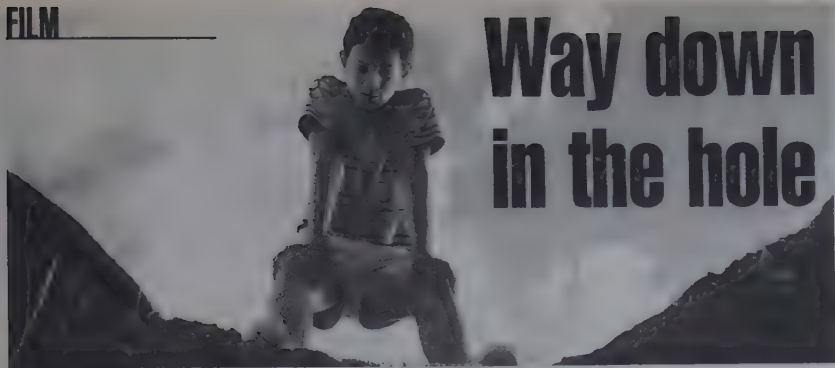
of a new wave of Middle Eastern cinema with distinctively western influences. The differences between the two aren't a matter of good and bad: *Baran* is more fable-like, timeless, with a vein of melancholy comedy reminiscent of the French New Wave; *Osama*, as Barmak himself has attested, owes more to *Lawrence of Arabia* than Truffaut and sends out a political message that's very much of the moment, carried by an earnestness that's sure to satisfy those who despise the Taliban's twisted religious hypocrisy and tyranny—namely, 99 per cent of the planet.

BARMAK GETS his message across with seductive, sweeping images: a flood of burqas in a street protest; a crippled child hobbling behind a crowd evacuating a hospital; heads bobbing in prayer; children climbing a wretched tree; dozens of half-naked boys pouring water over their heads in absolution. Barmak successfully conveys narrative and theme through these skillfully constructed images, yet I must confess that there was something slightly more persuasive for me in *Baran*'s playful indirectness. Maybe I'm just being resistant to what I fear is a sort of globalized sameness in movies, but the distinctiveness of Majidi's film haunts my memories and emotions more deeply, even though I know perfectly well that *Osama* is essentially a devastating true story.

Since I'm at risk here of making *Osama* sound a bit bland—in fact, it's a remarkable first feature—let me say that one of my favourite things about it was easily the performance of Arif Herati as a street kid named Espandi. With his natural mischievousness, Herati has a little more life in him than his other non-professional co-stars. He has a scene where, after recognizing her, he demands a bribe from Golbahari to secure his silence, and the opportunistic little bastard has this smile frozen on his face the entire time. He later finds himself going through great pains to protect Golbahari (whom he dubs Osama, not necessarily after Mr. bin Laden but because it's a traditionally heroic name), and his character arc is the film's most convincing. The sort of magic he brings to *Osama* is itself a little treasure. ●

OSAMA

Written and directed by Siddiq Barmak • Starring Marina Golbahari, Arif Herati and Zubaida Sahar • Now on video



The creepiness sneaks up on you in coming-of-age thriller *I'm Not Scared*

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

I'm Not Scared feels like a horror film, but a strange one. For starters, it's a kid's movie, about children and told from a young boy's perspective, but it's threatening and dangerous in a way movie kids don't usually have to deal with. And while it's a horror film there are no zombies, no vampires, no wendigos or aliens, no creatures of any kind. The chills come from something more fundamental, a kind of moral nightmare that's

more unsettling than any spook or goblin could ever be.

The opening scene finds a group of kids from a rural Italian village playing. Or perhaps "playing" is better; a slightly older boy with mean eyes has just won the leadership of the gang and orders a poor fat girl to "show it to us." She angrily refuses, threatens to leave and not play with

the it-showing and gets the kids to go play at an old farmhouse. Later, Michele returns alone to the farmhouse to retrieve his sister's lost glasses, and when he does he finds a slat of metal covered in grass. When he looks underneath the slat he discovers a nasty dark hole. And in that hole he finds a kid.

Why is there a kid in a hole? Michele doesn't know, but the kid becomes Michele's own little secret. He steals out to the farmhouse to see him, curious about this curiosity, sneaking him water and food when he can. And he wonders—who would put a kid in dark evil hole? Who could do that to a little kid? And then he finds out: his own parents, wrapped up in a kidnapping scheme orchestrated by his father's "friend" Sergio.

It's a vertiginous moment when

Michele makes this discovery, both for him and for the audience. Suddenly the cheery, familial tone takes on an edge as we and Michele see his parents' nervousness, their own moral confusion at being involved in this rapidly souring plan. Now their happy talk of vacations feels compromised and evil. At one point Michele's father tries to justify himself: "There are things that seem wrong when you....," he says, trailing off when he realizes he has nothing to say. He can't explain what he's done to his son; he can't even explain it to himself. And as the desperation of the kidnappers intensifies, the pressure on Michele's parents grows and Michele is left to figure out what to do now that right and wrong have been turned inside-out for him.

As quietly disturbing as it is, *I'm Not Scared* is a strangely beautiful film. The locale is gorgeous, spare and empty but somehow not desolate. The countryside has the look of sand dunes in the desert, except rather than sand it's rolling hills of

golden wheat under huge summer skies. The camera is alive and alert, its gaze always roaming and curious, finding ants on eyes or dead snakes in the dusty road or little kids with crusted-over eyes in holes in the ground. The editing is cool and confident, sometimes whipping back and forth between Michele's frightened face and the buzzing wheels of his bike to crank up the tension, sometimes slowing down and letting things get quiet, trusting the audience to know that this is all going somewhere. Which it is.

It sneaks up on you, this film. It can startle the hell out of you, and worry you, and freak you out a little. Its dust and dirt and noonday glare have a cumulative, quietly unsettling effect and you emerge from it blinking, unsure, like a child seeing the sun again for the first time. ●

I'M NOT SCARED

Directed by Gabriele Salvatores • Written by Niccolò Ammaniti • Starring Giuseppe Cristiano, Dino Abbrescia and Diego Abatantuono • Opens Fri, Apr 23

REVUE SUSPENSE

them anymore. The other kids are quiet, and look away nervously. The fat girl slowly smears tears across her face and starts to unfasten the buttons of her shorts.

It's the kind of scene that feels wrong, and puts you off-balance from the start. Luckily one of the boys, Michele, pipes up and derails



Every week in *Heresy*, *Vue* invites its film writers to champion a film that everyone else dismisses as trash, or to slam a film that everyone else regards as art. This week: **Stephen Notley** praises *Armageddon*.

Armageddon: insufferably loud, blaringly pro-American, cheesy, dumb, the apex of a progression of ever-more craptastic late-'90s summer blockbusters like *Mission: Impossible*, *Independence Day* and *Godzilla* all competing to see who could deliver the emptiest experience of explosions and cars cartwheeling down the street. Right?

Wrong. *Armageddon* is one of the most brilliant, perfect movies ever made. Seriously.

How do you make a movie about the end of the world? If you're *Deep Impact*, you invent a quasi-realistic disaster scenario that dissolves into mushy soap opera. If you're *Last Night*, you focus on small, seemingly innocuous human interactions during the Earth's final hours. And if you're *Armageddon*, you pick up the gauntlet and say if we're really talking about the end of all things then full intensity is the only way to go. Every scene has to be turned up to 11 because everything is at stake;



every choice they make is a referendum on all of humanity's worthiness to exist.

It's like, imagine if we discovered an asteroid was gonna hit Earth in 2072 and over the next 50 years robot probes were sent up to gently alter its course and on the appointed date the world cheered as the asteroid passed safely behind the Earth. It would be great victory for humanity—and *Armageddon* is the movie they'd make about it 1,000 years later, a totally overblown mythologizing of what happened.

Sure, it's American as hell, but it's the good America, the America of red, white and blue dreams, presented in cellphone commercial soft imagery, manipulative like crazy, but hey—it's the end of the world. Everything is mythic: the father-son dynamic between Bruce Willis and Ben Affleck, the tension between the prole drill team and the by-the-book, straight-edge NASA types, the love story between Affleck and Liv

Tyler. What movie would bounce animal crackers off Liv Tyler's stomach and dare claim it was speaking to all human love that's ever been? *Armageddon*, because it goes for it without irony and believes absolutely in its own intensity. When it softpans through mosques thronged with cheering or sweeps over an old JFK billboard with the words "Life Peace Hope," dammit, it means it.

And it's a noble myth. Despite its religious title, *Armageddon* is slyly secular and scientific. The big, inspiring send-off speech to the astronauts invokes not prayers to God or gods but a glorification of the human quest for knowledge, and the whole frickin' movie is a near-fetishistic love letter to NASA and space science. In these darkening days of dangerous religious thinking we need myths of universal redemption that draw from humanity rather than from absent gods—and dammit, that's *Armageddon*. ●

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—Y.A. Kean, *NYT*

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WEDNESDAY - 7PM

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NEW THIS WEEK



I'm Not Scared (P) Giuseppe Cristiano, Mattia Di Piero and Aitana Sanchez Gijon star in *Mediterraneo* director Gabriele Salvatores's involving thriller about a nine-year-old Sicilian boy who discovers another boy being held captive in a hole beneath an abandoned house. In Italian with English subtitles.



An Injury to One/On to Ottawa (M) Two hour-long documentaries about volatile labour struggles, the first involving miners in Butte, Montana and the second about the thousands of disenfranchised Canadian workers who headed en masse to Ottawa in 1935 to present their demands to the government. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri, May 7 (7pm)*

New York Minute (CO, FP) Mary-Kate Olsen, Ashley Olsen and Eugene Levy star in *What a Girl Wants* director Dennis Gordon's tween comedy about two twin sisters—one a scholarly "good girl," the other a rebellious "punk rocker"—who have a full day of misadventures when they sneak off together to New York City.

The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (M) Directors Kim Bartley and Donnacha O'Brien's sensational fly-on-the-wall documentary depicting the attempted overthrow of Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and how his opponents' manipulation of the media nearly enabled the coup to succeed. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri, May 7 (9pm); Sat-Wed, May 8-12 (7pm)*



The Son (M) Olivier Gourmet and Morgan Marinne star in *Rosetta* writer/directors Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's acclaimed drama about a carpentry instructor who develops a mysterious fascination with one of the boys in his class. In French with English subtitles. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Sat-Wed, May 8-12 (8:30pm)*

That Touch of Mink (EFS) Cary Grant and Doris Day star in *Lower Come Back* director Delbert Mann's 1962 comedy about a dashing tycoon who falls in love with an unemployed working girl while trying to make amends for having splashed her with his limousine. *Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, May 10 (8pm)*

Van Helsing (CO, FP) Hugh Jackman, Kate Beckinsale and Richard Roxburgh star in *The Mummy* director Stephen Sommers's action/horror blockbuster, in which celebrated 19th-century monster hunter Abraham Van Helsing finds himself battling Count Dracula, the Wolf Man and Frankenstein's monster in a remote Eastern European village.

FIRST-RUN MOVIES



The Corporation (P) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.



Ella Enchanted (CO) Anne Hathaway, Hugh Dancy and Cary Elwes star in *Get Over It* director Tommy O'Haver's comic fantasy about a young woman's quest to lift the burdensome "gift of obedience" bestowed upon her by a well-meaning fairy. Based on the YA novel by Gail Caron Levine



Envy (CO, FP) Jack Black, Ben Stiller, Rachel Weisz and Amy Poehler star in *Wag the Dog* director Barry Levinson's comedy about a pair of lifelong buddies whose friendship undergoes severe strain when one of them becomes incredibly wealthy by inventing a device that vaporizes dog feces.



Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman.



The Girl Next Door (CO) Elisha Cuthbert, Emile Hirsch and Timothy Olyphant star in *The Animal* director Luke Greenfield's creepy romantic comedy about a high-school senior who falls in love with his gorgeous new next-door neighbour, only to learn that she's a former porn star.



Godsend (CO, FP) Greg Kinnear, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos, Robert De Niro and Cameron Bright star in *The Hole* director Nick Hamm's occult thriller about a couple who unwittingly hire a mysterious scientist to use an experimental cloning procedure to bring their dead son back to life.



Goodbye, Lenin! (CO) Daniel Brühl, Kathrin Sass and Maria Simon star in *Director Wolfgang Becker's* comedy about a young German man whose staunchly Communist mother awakens from a lengthy coma and, fearing that the shock of hearing the truth will kill her, goes to ridiculous lengths to keep her from finding out that the Iron Curtain has fallen. In German with English subtitles.



Hellboy (CO, FP) Ron Perlman, Selma Blair and John Hurt star in *Blade II* director Guillermo del Toro's big-screen adaptation of the popular comic book about a demon who is adopted by U.S. agents and raised as a force for good after

being brought into our dimension as a result of a mystical Nazi experiment gone awry.

Hidalgo (CO) Viggo Mortensen, Malcolm McDowell and Omar Sharif star in *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* director Joe Johnston's exotic equestrian epic, set in Saudi Arabia in 1890, about an American Pony Express courier who travels to the desert to take part in a lucrative but dangerous and grueling horse race.

Home on the Range (CO, FP) The voices of Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Judi Dench, Steve Buscemi and Jennifer Tilly are featured in this animated Disney cartoon about a group of animals who band together to raise enough money to pay off the mortgage on the farm where they all live.



Kill Bill, Vol. 2 (CO, FP) Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Michael Madsen and Daryl Hannah star in the conclusion of writer/director Quentin Tarantino's genre-hopping exploitation epic, in which a former assassin relentlessly tracks down the man who employed her, impregnated her, shot her and left her for dead.

The Ladykillers (CO) Tom Hanks, Marlon Wayans, Irma P. Hall and J.K. Simmons star in *Raising Arizona* writer/directors Joel and Ethan Coen's remake of the classic 1955 comedy about an eccentric criminal mastermind whose plan to rob a New Orleans riverboat is complicated by his meddling landlady, whose conveniently located basement is integral to his scheme.

Laws of Attraction (CO, FP) Pierce Brosnan, Julianne Moore, Frances Fisher and Parker Posey star in *Sliding Doors* director Peter Howitt's romantic comedy about a husband-and-wife pair of divorce attorneys struggling to keep their own marriage together while terminating those of their clients.

Main Hoon Na (CO) Shahrukh Khan, Zayed Khan, Amrita Rao and Naseeruddin Shah star in director Farah Khan's Bollywood musical about a major who must pose as a university student in order to protect the life of an officer's daughter and to fulfill the dying wish of his martyred father. In Hindi.

Man on Fire (CO, FP) Denzel Washington, Dakota Fanning and Christopher Walken star in *Top Gun* director Tony Scott's glossy revenge flick about a former U.S. Marine who takes a job as a bodyguard for the daughter of a wealthy family in Mexico City that has been targeted by a gang of kidnappers.

Mean Girls (CO, FP) Lindsay Lohan, Lacey Chabert, Rachel McAdams and Tina Fey (who also wrote the script) star in *Freaky Friday* director Mark S. Waters's anthropological teen comedy about a high school transfer student who finds herself at war with a ruthless clique of snobby popular girls.

NASCAR 3D: The IMAX Experience (FP)



Will the tiee happened to Kate Beckinsale? Once the dutiful English miss who starred in classy Shakespearean adaptations like Kenneth Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing*, classy Henry James adaptations like *The Golden Bowl* and classy Jane Austen adaptations like the BBC version of *Emma*, Beckinsale has reinvented herself in movies like *Underworld* and the new blockbuster *Van Helsing* as a leather-clad piece-of-monster-hitting *Waxwork* babe. Perhaps Beckinsale changed agents or perhaps she simply decided it was high time she stopped pretending she was attracted to guys like Robert Sean Leonard, ditched the corsets and traded them in for a few crossbows and a listful of wooden stakes. Or maybe she simply received toxic levels of exposure to Jerry Bruckheimer while she was on the set of *Pearl Harbor*. Either way, we miss the old Beck; why can't she crawl back into her 19th-century Dunelmans and hug us like yesteryear's Juliet to Eden Clitell?

Kiefer Sutherland and Jeff Gordon are featured in *Free Willy* director Simon Wincer's jumbo-screen documentary about the history of the NASCAR racing circuit and the cutting-edge technology that the sport's top drivers rely on to win competitions.

The Passion of the Christ (CO) Jim Caviezel and Monica Bellucci star in *Braveheart* director Mel Gibson's ultra-controversial, blood-soaked Biblical epic depicting the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In Latin and Aramaic with English subtitles.

The Punisher (CO, FP) Thomas Jane and John Travolta star in writer/director Jonathan Hensleigh's film adaptation of the popular Marvel comic book about a former FBI agent who reinvents himself as a ruthless crimefighting vigilante when an evil crime syndicate kills his family.

Scooky-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (CO, FP) Matthew Lillard, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Linda Cardellini and Freddie Prinze Jr. star in director Raja Gosnell's sequel to his 2002 hit, in which the Mystery, Inc. detective agency battles an evil scientist who has developed a machine that recreates the greatest foes from their past cases.

Starsky and Hutch (FP) Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Snoop Dogg star in *Old School* director Todd Phillips's irreverent film version of the 1970s TV cop show about a pair of mismatched policemen who fight crime with the aid of their souped-up Ford Torino and their omniscient street informer Huggy Bear.

13 Going on 30 (CO, FP) Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo, Kathy Baker and Judy Greer star in *Tadpole* director Gary Winick's comic fantasy about a gawky 13-year-old girl who wakes up one morning as her gorgeous, successful 30-year-old self as a result of a magical wish.

Touching the Void (P) Joe Simpson, Simon Yates, Nicholas Aaron and Brendan Mackay star in *One Day in September* director Kevin Macdonald's documentary about Yates's astonishing, harrowing struggle to survive a disastrous mountaineering expedition in the Peruvian Andes. Based on the book by Joe Simpson.

Walking Tall (CO) The Rock, Johnny Knoxville and Neal McDonough star in *All About the Benjamins* director Kevin Bray's modernized re-imagining of the 1973 drive-in classic, in which an ex-member of the U.S. Army Special Forces makes it his mission to clean up his small hometown after a corrupt casino owner turns it into a drug-riddled cesspool.

LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285
FP: Famous Players
GA: Gameau Theatre, 433-0728
L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728
M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212
P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728

GARNEAU theatre
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Sat & Sun Matinees 2:30 pm
•14A•

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FILM LISTINGS

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GARNEAU
8712-109 St. 433-0728

TOUCHING THE VOID
Daily 7:00 9:15 Sat Sun 2:00 No 7:00 show Wed. May 12

PRINCESS
FRONT-ROW AL. & 137-0778

THE CORPORATION
Daily 6:45 9:30 Sat Sun 2:00

I'M NOT SCARED
Daily 7:00 9:10 Sat Sun 2:30

METRO CINEMA
9828-101A Ave.
Cineplex Theatres, 458-9822

AN INJURY TO ONE / ON TO OTTAWA
Fri 7:00

THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE TELEVISED
Fri 9:00 Sat Wed 7:00

THE SON
Sat-Wed 8:30

WATERWALKER FILM FESTIVAL
Thu 7:00

GRANDIN THEATRE
Grandin Mall, St. Winston Churchill Ave.
St. Albert, 458-9822

NEW YORK MINUTE
Daily 12:45 3:10 6:45 8:45

13 GOING ON 30
Daily 1:00 3:00 7:20 9:20

ENVY
Coarse language. Daily 1:15 3:15 7:10 9:10

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Daily 12:30 3:20 5:50 9:30

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for younger children. Daily 12:30 3:20 5:50 9:30

LEDUC CINEMAS
4702-50 St. 986-2728

NEW YORK MINUTE
Daily 7:20 9:25 Sat Sun 1:20 3:20

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for younger children. Daily 7:00 9:40 Sat Sun 1:00 3:45

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Daily 6:50 9:10 Sat Sun 1:10 3:10

ENVY
Coarse language. Daily 7:00 9:20 Sat Sun 1:00 3:30

WETASKIWIN CINEMAS
111 7th St. 352-3922

NEW YORK MINUTE
Daily 7:10 9:15 Sat Sun 1:10 3:10

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Daily 7:00 9:20 Sat Sun 1:20 3:20

ENVY
Coarse language. Daily 7:20 9:30 Sat Sun 1:00 3:30

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for younger children. Daily 6:50 9:30 Sat Sun 1:30 3:30

CINEPLEX ODEON CINEMAS
Theatre District
Cineplex, 458-9822

CINEMA GUIDE

CITY CENTRE
10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2
Daily 12:30 3:30 6:40 9:50

THE PUNISHER
Brutal violence throughout. Daily 9:30

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. Daily 12:20 3:25 6:30 9:40

13 GOING ON 30
Daily 1:20 4:30 7:20 10:10

GOODBYE, LENINI
Subtitled. Daily 12:40 3:40 6:50

LAW OF ATTRACTION
Daily 1:10 4:20 7:40 10:20

ENVY
Coarse language. Daily 1:30 4:40 7:30 10:15

GODSEND
Daily 12:50 3:50 7:50 10:25

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for young children. No passes. Daily 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

NEW YORK MINUTE
Daily 1:40 4:10 7:10 9:20

WEST MALL 8
8882-170 St. 444-1829

MYSTIC RIVER
Coarse language. Fri Mon Thu 6:30 9:10
Sat-Sun 2:05 3:00 9:10

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON
Fri Mon-Thu 6:40 Sat Sun 1:40 4:00 6:40

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
Violence, frightening scenes. Fri Mon-Thu 7:20
Sat Sun 2:30 7:20

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. Fri Mon-Thu 6:45 9:00
Sat-Sun 1:30 2:50 4:45 9:00

THE LAST SAMURAI
Gory scenes. Daily 8:30

TWISTED
Violence, coarse language. Daily 7:30 9:40

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN
Sat Sun 1:50 4:10

SECRET WINDOW
Violence. Fri Mon-Thu 7:00 9:15 Sat-Sun 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:15

TAKING VILES
Violence. Fri Mon-Thu 6:50 9:20
Sat-Sun 1:20 4:20 6:50 9:20

CONNIE AND CARLA
Fri Mon-Thu 7:10 9:30 Sat-Sun 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:30

CLAREVIEW
4211-139 Ave. 472-7860

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fri-Sun 1:20

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fri-Sun 12:30 3:30 6:50 9:50 Mon-Thu 3:50 6:50 9:50

THE PUNISHER
Brutal violence throughout. Daily 9:55

13 GOING ON 30
Fri-Sun 1:50 4:40 7:10 9:20 Mon-Thu 4:40 7:10 9:20

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. Fri-Sun 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
Mon-Thu 3:30 6:30 9:30

LAW OF ATTRACTION
Fri-Sun 2:00 4:50 7:50 Mon-Thu 4:50 7:50

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Fri-Sun 12:40 2:50 5:00 7:20 9:40 Mon-Thu 5:00 7:20 9:40

GODSEND
Daily 4:10 6:40 9:40

ENVY
Coarse language. Fri-Sun 1:10 3:40 6:50 9:10
Mon-Thu 3:40 6:50 9:10

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for young children. No passes.

NEW YORK MINUTE
Fri-Sun 1:00 1:30 4:00 4:30 7:00 7:30 10:00 10:20
Mon-Thu 4:00 4:30 7:00 7:30 10:00 10:20

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON
7520-111 St. 458-9822

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 3:30

HIDALGO
Violence. Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 12:40 3:40 6:45 Sun 6:45

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 9:50

HELLOBOY
Violence. Daily 1:20 4:20 7:20 10:20

WALKING TALL
Violence. Daily 10:45

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. Daily 2:10 5:20 8:10 10:45

13 GOING ON 30
Daily 1:10 3:50 7:10 9:45

THE PUNISHER
Brutal violence throughout. Daily 1:50 4:50 7:40 10:45

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. Daily 12:10 1:10 3:40 6:40 9:40

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language. Fri-Sun 12:45 4:58 6:45 Mon-Thu 2:15 7:15

ENVY
Coarse language. Daily 12:30 2:50 5:15 7:45 10:15

GODSEND
Daily 12:30 2:50 5:15 7:45 10:15

LAW OF ATTRACTION
Daily 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:15

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for young children. No passes. Fri-Sat 12:00 1:00 3:30 2:30 5:00 4:00 4:30 5:00
Sun-Tue 12:00 1:00 3:30 2:30 5:00 4:00 4:30 5:00
Wed 12:00 1:00 3:30 2:30 5:00 4:00 4:30 5:00
Thu 8:00 8:30 9:00 10:00 10:30

RAISING HELEN
No passes. Sneak preview Sat 2:00

GALAXY CINEMAS @ SHEEDWOOD PARK
2880 Sheppard Ave. E. 458-9822

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fri-Sun 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

HOME ON THE RANGE
Fri-Sun 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

ELLA ENCHANTED
Fri-Sun 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2
Daily 6:45 10:00

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. Fri-Sun 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00
Sat-Sun 12:15 2:00 6:40 9:55 Mon-Thu 6:40 9:55

13 GOING ON 30
Fri-Sun 12:15 2:00 6:40 9:55 Mon-Thu 6:40 9:55

GODSEND
Daily 7:25 10:05

ENVY
Coarse language. Fri-Sun 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:15
Sat-Sun 12:45 3:30 6:30 9:15 Mon-Thu 6:30 9:15

LAW OF ATTRACTION
Daily 7:05 9:25

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Fri-Sun 12:45 3:30 6:30 9:15 Mon-Thu 6:30 9:15

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for young children. No passes. Fri-Sun 12:15 4:10 6:30 7:10 9:30 10:10
Sat-Sun 12:00 1:00 3:15 4:10 6:30 7:10 9:30 10:10
Mon-Thu 6:30 7:10 9:30 10:10

NEW YORK MINUTE
Fri-Sun 12:45 3:45 7:00 9:50 Sat-Sun 1:15 3:45 7:00 9:50
Mon-Thu 7:00 9:50

NORTH EDMONTON CINEMAS
14231-137 Ave. 732-2236

HIDALGO
Violence. Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 1:10 4:30 7:20 Sun 4:30 7:20

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Daily 12:20 2:20

HELLOBOY
Violence. Daily 4:40 7:30 10:10

HOME ON THE RANGE
Daily 12:50 2:40

WALKING TALL
Violence. Daily 10:25

14A THE PUNISHER
Brutal violence throughout. Daily 1:50 5:00 7:50 10:30

13 GOING ON 30
Fri-Wed 1:30 4:00 7:00 9:15 Thu 4:00 7:00 9:15
Sat and Strollers Screening Thu 1:00 am

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2
Daily 1:00 4:10 7:25 10:20

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. Daily 12:00 3:30 6:40

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Daily 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:35 10:10

LAW OF ATTRACTION
Daily 1:40 3:50 6:50 9:15

GODSEND
Daily 4:50 7:05 9:20

ENVY
Coarse language. Daily 2:00 4:20 7:10 9:45

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for younger children. No passes. Sneak preview Sat 2:00

NEW YORK MINUTE
Daily 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 9:55

RAISING HELEN
No passes. Sneak preview Sun 2:00

FAMOUS PLAYERS
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CINEMA CITY 12
130 Ave. 40th St. 472-3729

SHOWING AT BOTH CINEMAS

GATEWAY 8
1000 Gateway 7-11 458-9822

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2
Fri-Sat Sun 1:00 3:40 6:40 9:40 12:40 Mon-Tue Wed 12:40 3:40 6:40 9:40

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Fri-Sat Sun 12:45 3:30 6:30 9:15 Mon-Tue Wed 6:30 9:15

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fri-Sat Sun 12:15 2:30 4:30 6:55 9:15
Mon-Tue Wed 6:55 9:15

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND
Coarse language. Fri-Sat Sun 1:20 3:50 7:25 9:55
Mon-Tue Wed 7:25 9:55

HOME ON THE RANGE
Fri-Sat Sun 12:35 2:30 4:25 7:20 Mon-Tue Wed Thu 7:20

NEW YORK MINUTE
Fri-Sat Sun 12:25 2:40 4:45 7:10 9:40
Mon-Tue Wed Thu 7:10 9:40

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Fri-Sat Sun 11:55 4:15 7:15 Mon-Tue Wed Thu 7:15

SILVERCITY WEST EDMONTON MALL
10000-102 Ave. 421-7020

HASCAR 3D: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE
12:30 2:15 4:00 6:30 9:00

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Daily 12:45 pm

HELLOBOY
Violence. 12:35 3:35 7:35

13 GOING ON 30
12:25 3:40 7:05 9:30

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2
12:40 3:40 7:20 10:30

THE PUNISHER
Brutal violence throughout. 3:30 7:25 10:10

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. 12:50 3:55 7:15 10:35

ENVY
Coarse language. Fri-Sat Sun Tue Wed Thu 1:30 5:15 7:45 10:40
Sun 5:15 7:45 10:40

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for young children. 1:15 4:45 7:00 9:45

GODSEND
10:25

LAW OF ATTRACTION
10:15

18A VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for young children. 12:30 1:00 3:15 5:50 4:15 6:45 7:10 9:15

NEW YORK MINUTE
Daily 1:00 4:10 7:25 10:20

RAISING HELEN
Sneak preview Sun 2:00

WESTMOUNT CENTRE
111 Ave. Grand Rd. 458-9728

13 GOING ON 30
Fri-Wed 1:30 4:00 7:00 9:15 Thu 4:00 7:00 9:15
Sat and Strollers Screening Thu 1:00 am

MAN ON FIRE
Brutal violence. Daily 12:00 3:30 6:40

MEAN GIRLS
Coarse language, not recommended for younger children. Daily 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:35 10:10

VAN HELSING
Frightening scenes, not recommended for younger children. No passes. Sneak preview Sun 2:00

MOVIES 12
130 Ave. 40th St. 472-3729

CINEMA CITY 12
130 Ave. 40th St. 472-3729

SHOWING AT BOTH CINEMAS

CONNIE AND CARLA
Sat-Sun 11:31 Daily 2:10 4:50 7:25 9:45

TAKING LIVES
Sat-Sun 11:31 Daily 2:10 4:50 7:25 9:45

ELUCIDATED
Sat-Sun 11:31 Daily 2:10 4:50 7:25 9:45

THE LEGEND OF JOHNNY LINGO
Genre Cat 12 on Sat-Sun 11:40 Daily 2:01 4:10 7:10 9:20
Fri-Sat late night 11:30

BECKETT WARRIOR
Sat-Sun 11:05 Daily 1:20 4:20 7:05 9:30
Fri-Sat late night 11:50

ALONG CAME POLLY
Sat-Sun 11:20 Daily 1:35 4:35 7:15 9:25
Fri-Sat late night 11:45

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. Sat-Sun 11:30
Daily 2:15 5:00 7:35 10:00
Fri-Sat late night 12:10

DAVEY CRYER: KAKASHI
Sat-Sun 11:15 Daily 1:30 4:40 7:00 9:25
Fri-Sat late night 11:40

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
Adventure. No passes. Daily 12:30 4:11 8:00 Fri-Sat late night 11:30

COLD MOUNTAIN
Daily 12:50 3:45 6:45 9:40

MIRRS OF MURDER
Coarse language. Sat-Sun 10:10
Fri-Sat late night 11:30

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
Disturbing. No passes. Daily 12:30 4:11 8:00 Fri-Sat late night 11:30

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN
Movies 12 on Sat-Sun 11:40 Daily 2:10 4:25 7:20 9:20
Fri-Sat late night 11:30

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WETASKIWIN CINEMAS 4

Miner infractions

Avant-garde doc *An Injury to One* digs up the ugly history of Butte, Montana

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

With his documentary *An Injury to One*, Travis Wilkerson establishes himself as sort of an alt-country version of Ken Burns. Like Burns's signature film, *The Civil War*, *An Injury to One* gives us lots of slow pans across dusty old photographs while traditional folk tunes play on the soundtrack and a narrator calmly lays out the historical context for what we're seeing. But where Burns traffics in comforting nostalgia (even when he's describing some of the most traumatic events in American history), Wilkerson wants to lay bare the black heart of the American experience. He's prickly, austere, unsentimental; he narrates the film in a quiet monotone that makes it impossible for the viewer to feel anything but unease about the events he describes. And the folk music on the soundtrack is performed by artists like Richard Buckner, the Dirty Three, Jim O'Rourke and William Oldham, who create arrange-

ments as dry, spacious and harsh as the Montana landscape where Wilkerson's story takes place. Instead of having them sing the words, Wilkerson simply flashes the lyrics, one by one, on the screen. And he deliberately chooses a non-fancy font.

An Injury to One tells the story of Butte, Montana, whose ugly history is a long, grim catalogue of worker mistreatment and ecological devastation. The town's entire economy was built on its lucrative mines, which at their

REVUE DOCUMENTARY

height supplied 10 per cent of the world's copper. With one corporation, the Anaconda Mining Company, in control of not just the mines but the government and the judiciary as well, workers faced almost insurmountable odds when it came to organizing unions or fighting for better wages and safer working conditions.

WILKERSON FOCUSES his film on Frank Little, a charismatic labour activist from the IWW who came to Butte in 1917 hoping to rectify that problem. The workers' enthusiastic reception for his hardcore socialist message represented a profound threat to the Anaconda bosses; when

Little was abducted and murdered by an unknown group of thugs, many suspected that they were acting under company orders.

For Wilkerson, Butte is the embodiment of capitalism at its most amoral and the employer/worker relationship at its most exploitative. It may be left-wing agitprop, but it's agitprop of an unusually restrained kind. Wilkerson has assembled the film less like a director than as a graphic designer. He's constantly flashing text on the screen, arranging it in patterns around artfully cropped photos and simple charts and diagrams—Wilkerson's narration is dry, straightforward, but his visual evidence is impressionistic, like an avant-garde PowerPoint presentation. I've never seen anything quite like it, and the film's unusual approach gripped my attention all the way to Wilkerson's disturbing epilogue, where he shows us what Butte has become today: the home of an immense, polluted "lake" with a pH level roughly equivalent to battery acid. In its quietly devastating way, *An Injury to One* is just as corrosive a spectacle. ●

AN INJURY TO ONE

Written and directed by Travis Wilkerson
• Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri, May 7
(7pm) (with On to Ottawa) • Metro
Cinema • 425-9212

Freaks and Geeks

Continued from page 37

portray high school as a world of rigid cliques and a viciously maintained social order. (*Mean Girls* is only the most recent example.) But *Freaks and Geeks* realizes that in fact, high school isn't about rigidity; it's about uncertainty and change. Perhaps my favourite thing about *Freaks and Geeks* is the way it makes even the tiny world of McKinley High seem full of possibilities: the characters are constantly, bravely trying on new identities, making new friends, figuring out their own values at a time when the world is doing everything in its power to convince them to conform. In the final episode alone, Bonham-worshipping freak Nick becomes a disco dancer, would-be punk rocker Daniel spends a night with the geeks playing Dungeons and Dragons and Lindsay ditches an "academic summit" to spend two weeks in a van driving cross-country and following the Grateful Dead.

Freaks and Geeks was just as non-conformist as its characters, but unfortunately, the TV industry is even more ruthless than any high school when it comes to weeding out the weird, unpopular kids. That's why the mere existence of these DVDs is so heartwarming—it turns out this misfit show was actually pretty popular after all. *Freaks and Geeks*' theme song was Joan Jett's "Bad Reputation," but you'd have a hard time finding a show more fondly thought of than this one. ●

ARTS



Ellis Brothers Photography

Pop goes the Lies!

The *Sound of Music* still has charms, but I've outgrown most of them

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music* holds an inescapable, perpetual appeal for most people, especially if they saw it when they were little. For most kids, the idea of growing up in a family with six brothers and sisters was a very seductive fantasy—my sister and I were hooked on the Henry Fonda/Lucille Ball movie *Yours, Mine and Ours* for similar reasons. People cling to their fondness for *The Sound of Music* the way they cling to their happy memories of a childhood teddy bear, and I imagine that a lot of the people who'll be going to see *The Sound of Music* at the Citadel will enjoy revisiting a show that has such happy, idyllic associations for them.

They'll probably be perfectly pleased with what they get; Tom Wood, directing his first musical, has mounted a faithful if not terribly inspired version of the familiar story about an irrepressible nun who moves into the house of a stern Austrian widower to become governess for his children, but winds up becoming their stepmother instead. Wood has three secret weapons in his arsenal. Elizabeth Stepkowski Tarhan, who plays the Mother Abbess, sends the audience into the intermission with a ceiling-rattling rendition of "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" and then ends the show with a

reprise of the song that seems loud enough to alert every Nazi in a 20-mile radius. Five-year-old Sara Holmes, who plays Gretl, the youngest of the Von Trapps, is almost dangerously adorable—I guess you could call it "awwwwww"-inspiring. (Holmes will be alternating the role with Janelle Jorde, who I'm sure is equally darling.) And Loretta Bailey finds a way to play Maria, that fresh-faced piper of the Austrian Alps, that doesn't become cloying.

ON THE OTHER HAND, maybe I'm just perverse, but I never believed for a moment that Captain Von Trapp (Jan Filipis) would fall in love with Maria—especially not when he's already engaged to Jan Alexandra Smith's Elsa Schraeder, a witty, sophisticated, self-possessed industrialist who he seems much more compatible with. (I know, I know, Elsa winds up capitulating to the Nazis when they take over Austria, but that's just convenient plotting—and besides, he's clearly fallen

in love with Maria long before Elsa's path-of-least-resistance attitude toward the Nazis is revealed.) Smith is so spontaneous and sexy and grown-up that the Captain's infatuation with Maria seems almost infantile. Smith's Elsa seems like a woman you could share a dirty joke with, and I mean that as the highest possible compliment. You really have to take the Captain's change of affections on faith—especially since, in a particularly glaring bit of lazy playwrighting, the key moment where he falls in love with Maria

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The final countdown



Nathan Cuckow and Chris Craddock are primed for takeoff in drug- and booze-fueled 3... 2... 1

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

3... 2... 1 may be the first play that Nathan Cuckow and Chris Craddock have ever collaborated on as writers, but they've worked together so many times in the past and their artistic outlooks are so similar that it was probably inevitable that they'd hook up eventually. Craddock, of course, is the very prolific actor and playwright whose work ranges from broad, energetic comedies like *Boy Groove* and *On Being a Peon* to more introspective (but still funny) plays like *Dream Life*, *Hal*, and *Moving Along*. Cuckow, meanwhile, is best known as an actor—he was nominated for a Sterling Award for his performance as the meanest, most aimless character in *SubUrbia* and played a similarly unpleasant bully a few months ago in *This Is Our Youth*—but he also scored a big hit at the Fringe and NeXtFest in 2002 with his one-man show *StandUPHomo*.

Both men are at the forefront of a dynamic Edmonton movement to create theatre with youth appeal—plays that audiences under 35 will actually want to see instead of being dragged to by their parents. "There's a concern when you see the mean, average age of the habitual going up and up and up," Craddock says. "And after a while, you wonder who'll be left, who's going to see it?"

"Which is not to say that our work can't appeal to audiences over 40," Cuckow adds. "God forbid. But we are making a conscious effort to appeal to a younger demographic as well." For Cuckow, one of the artistic directors of Kill Your Television Theatre, that's meant staging Edmonton productions of edgy New York hits like *SubUrbia*, *R&J*, *Stop Kiss* and *This Is Our Youth*—shows with a frank, sympathetic attitude toward drugs, sex, homosexuality and lots of rich roles for actors in their 20s. For Craddock, the artistic director of Azimuth Theatre, it's meant turning the tiny Azimuth performing space into a hub of activity for Edmonton's emerging theatre artists (people like *Dead Man Talking*'s Jeremy Baumung and the girls of *Panties Productions*) as well as a launching pad for plays of his own, like *Porn Star* and *Boy Groove*.

3... 2... 1 may be the riskiest project either Cuckow or Craddock has ever written. It's a funny, violent, blisteringly profane pressure-cooker whose intense mood will probably only be heightened by the claustrophobic immediacy of Azimuth space, where, as Craddock notes, "There's no moat between the audience and the performer." They play Kyle and

Clinton, two Pilsner-drinking head-bangers from Wetaskiwin who get together for a drug and alcohol binge of epic proportions. But their apparent hedonism hides a deeper sadness, and as their memories of their late friend Danny keep intruding on their conversation, the play takes a very dark turn indeed.

When I talked to Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow last weekend about 3... 2... 1, Craddock was nursing a sprained ankle and hoping that the ministrations of actress (and newly licensed acupuncturist) Andrea House would restore him to health in time for opening night. Here's our conversation.

Vue Weekly: Tell me how the idea for this show developed.

Chris Craddock: Well, one of our first ideas when we decided to collaborate was to do two solo shows sort of squashed together, where we'd play 1,000 characters and jump all around in time and tell a really complicated story. But then, very early on, we decided, "You know, let's not."

Nathan Cuckow: Well, I kind of liked the idea of two people trapped in a room. We sort of worked from there.

CC: Then the question became, "Well, why are they there?" And once we came up with the reason, everything else came out of that.

NC: We thought that if they were going to be having a drug and alcohol bender, we liked the idea of the play having the appearance of a party, but with a strong underlying justification for why they're doing what they're doing. It only appears to be senseless partying.

CC: And that allows us to explore a lot of themes, like North Americans' relationship to pain. I don't think we're a culture that has sufficient mourning rituals in place; people are always taught that the way to get through grief is to anesthetize it when in fact the only way to do it is to feel it.... But we're also finding it interesting that these two characters are not urbane, university-educated guys trying to come to grips with their pain. They're small-town guys.

NC: They don't talk about how they feel either. The intoxicants are sort of what allow them to open up and share with each other.

VW: Is that small-town world a milieu that you're familiar with? Do you know these guys in real life?

CC: Well, I lived in Spruce Grove from Grade 8 to the end of Grade 10,

PREVIEW THEATRE

newly licensed acupuncturist) Andrea House would restore him

SEE NEXT PAGE

happens offstage and is only described to us later.

Everything in this play happens just a little bit too easily—the Captain falling in love with Maria, the Von Trapps' emergence as the most exciting singing troupe in Austria, their eventual escape from the Nazis. Despite the charms of the score, I'm afraid *The Sound of Music*

doesn't entrance me the way it did when I was seven: when the Captain has his children perform little musical numbers for his party guests, it just seems creepy to me, not cute. I don't want to be one of those kids anymore; I want to be one of the guests sneaking off to the study and getting drunk with Uncle Max.

Judging from the standing ovation the show received on opening night, I imagine most Edmontonians would disagree with me. I won't dis-

pute their honest enjoyment of the show; I just can't share in it, not anymore. Thanks to *The Sound of Music*, I'll always think of tea as "a drink with jam and bread" but nowadays the show just isn't my cup of it. ●

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Directed by Tom Wood • Songs by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II • Book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse • Starring Loretta Bailey and Jan Filips • Shoctor Theatre, The Citadel • To May 30 • 425-1820

3... 2... 1

Continued from previous page.

plus my family has a real rural background in southern Ontario. My dad came from a family of 12, and they were sort of simultaneously feared and revered as some of the baddest motherfuckers you'd ever want to know. Some of the stories I've heard about them are hilariously crazy—the preternatural strength of my uncle Jim, the way my dad took no shit, ever, marching up to guys twice his size and having them back down because of his weird confidence. So I know a bit about rough-and-tumble times.

VW: You had the situation, you had the setting, but was there a moment when you were writing the play when it all crystallized, when something clicked and you figured out what it was all about?

NC: Oh, yeah. The biggest jump for me actually came during the rehearsal process, and truly understanding what we were trying to say about these people. As we wrote, I think we starting making fun of the characters a little bit, but we moved towards caring about them and making them less dumb.

CC: We did find it hard not to have our own urbane voices come out of the characters.

NC: And then once we found our ending, everything really fell into place.

VW: It's interesting that the ads for the play market it as a combination of *FUBAR* and *Reservoir Dogs*. Maybe I'm fishing here, but is there some significance to the fact that your touchstones as a playwright seem to be movies rather than plays? That you're trying to bring some of the dynamism of movies into the theatre?

CC: Well, we could have said that it's a little bit Eric Bogosian and a little bit Sam Shepard, but who's gonna see that, you know? [They laugh.] Who are we going to reach that we wouldn't reach anyway?

VW: Fair enough, but at the same time, one of the distinctive things about your writing, Chris, is the way you really abandon the old-fashioned theatrical idea of scene one, scene two, scene three. Your plays tend instead to be these very fluid, onrushing experiences—one bit flows into the next one. And I wonder if that's a generational thing, if that's the result of playwrights who are more influenced by movies or animation than traditional plays.

CC: Well, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't heavily influenced by cinema, and to this day, I've seen many, many more movies than I have plays. And I love movies. So maybe there is something of a cinematic influence in my writing, but at the end of the day, even something like *Boy Groove*, while it may flow like a movie, it has all these monologues and ends up being more theatrical. My goal is to stretch the boundaries of theatre rather than write a play that pretends to be a movie.

NC: And in 3... 2... 1, we move in and out of the flashbacks in a very fluid, movie-ish way, but for us, it was really more about knowing when to reveal certain pieces of information. All the transitions just developed very naturally—you get to

the end of a scene and you just go, "Well, what's the next natural bit of information that would come out?"

VW: I've never been a drinker, I've never been a drug user, so the kind of hardcore bingeing that you show in this play is something that's totally beyond my experience. What do you think lies at the heart of that lifestyle—are they trying to live life to its fullest, or are they trying to dull the pain of a life that feels totally empty?

NC: I think it's a bit of both. Like anything in life, drugs can be a positive experience, and it can be a negative experience.

CC: I've only been to a few funerals in my time and maybe it's just the clan I'm from, but they tend to be very boozy events. And all the rules surrounding drugs and alcohol seem to fall away. There was a family funeral I was at, and normally we'd always be very circumspect about smoking a joint around the elder members of the family. But not this time—"Where are you going?" "I'm going outside to smoke this joint." And that was okay with everyone. There was one occasion where my 82-year-old grandmother said, "I'm 82 and I've never done that," and she came outside with us and took a puff. We asked her later how she felt and she said, "I don't ache anymore. My bones don't ache!" It seemed to be a very positive experience for her. So I don't know if it's the sadness everyone's feeling or what, but there seems to be less bullshit [at a funeral].

NC: Me, I'm a very experimental person. It's in my nature to try new things and change my perceptions, so drugs seem like a natural thing to experiment with. But of course, they can have terrible consequences.

CC: And addiction—like, serious drug addiction—is a horrifying thing. Nothing tears a life or a family apart more.

NC: It's a difficult thing. I don't recommend that everyone try them—it's a personal choice, and it's all about knowing who you are and why you're doing what you're doing and trying to keep things in balance.

VW: And in 3... 2... 1, you've got two guys just plunging headlong into drugs that they don't even know how to prepare properly.

NC: I know! That's beyond me too. CC: Well, there's a machismo about their indulgence—"How far can we take this?" And they've got a bar that's set pretty high going in.

NC: And it's such an important tribute to their friend that I think they really want to go for broke.

VW: That's a quality that comes up in *FUBAR* as well—you get the sense that the filmmakers admire the way that type of character lives life to its fullest. Maybe in the big picture they're treading water, but they also have this incredible gusto that prevents you from condescending to them.

CC: Well, that hedonism is certainly an element of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle. But I also think the other side of that determination to wring life for all it's worth is a realization that, well, maybe that's actually not that much. ●

3... 2... 1

Directed by Kevin Suley • Written and performed by Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow • Azimuth Theatre (11315-106 Ave.) • May 7-23 • 454-0583

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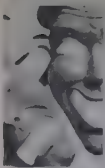
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theatre
notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Good dog!

Every year, the Alberta Playwrights Network sponsors the **Alberta Playwriting Competition**, the longest-running and richest contest of its kind in Canada: in addition to a workshop and a staged reading at the Playworks Ink theatre conference in Calgary this fall, the winner of the full-length category gets \$3,500, while \$1,500 goes to the winner of the "Discovery" category. Recent winners include Beth Graham and Daniela Vlaskalic's *The Last Train*, which had its world premiere this season at Shadow Theatre and Vern Thiessen's *Apple*, which won the 2002 Sterling Award for Outstanding New Play.

The APN announced this year's results last Friday, and the winner in the full-length category is... gosh, well, this is awkward. It's me, for my play *Bloodhound*, the story of a bored suburban husband who gets lured into a world of sex, violence and revenge by the talking female dog who lives in the backyard next door. (Trust me, it's a lot better than it sounds.)

I don't want to take up too much space writing about myself, but I wanted to thank a few people first: Ron Jenkins and Shona Neil at Workshop West, who commissioned the play; Lora Brovold, James MacDonald, Marilyn Ryan, Chris Fassbender, Dave Clarke and Ron Jenkins again, who were all involved in Workshop West's staged reading of the script in 2003 and helped me take a lot of rough edges off the writing; and David Belke and Ken Cameron from APN, who kicked my ass and got me to enter the play in the first place.

Now that that's over with, let's spend some quality time with this year's Discovery winner, Collin Doyle. He won for *The Mighty Carlins*, a comedy about a father and two sons who meet up every year on the anniversary of their wife and mother's death even though they're completely unequipped emotionally to get through the night without getting drunk and fighting. "It's the first time I think I've consciously tried writing something 'accessible,'" says Doyle, who began work on the script a couple of years ago when he was in Calgary acting in the ATP workshop of Stephen Massicotte's *Mary's Wedding* (itself a past winner of the APC). "It was something that wouldn't be as much of a Fringe show but which maybe had a chance of being produced [elsewhere]. Actually, I don't know how accessible it is—it's a pretty black comedy. One character is setting up a fetish porn site, another character is planning to steal a gold Jesus. So I don't know. But my intention was to write something that might go places."

Audiences probably are more

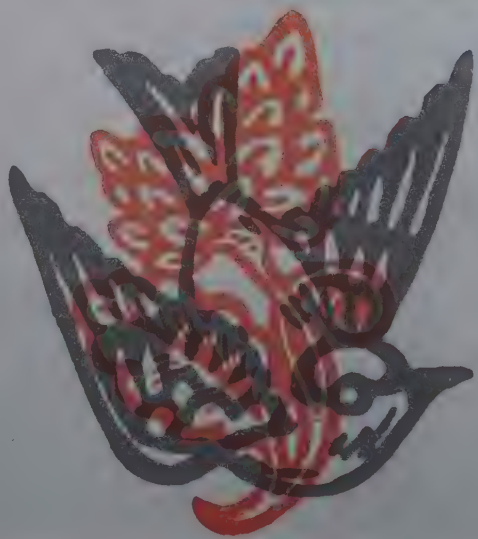
familiar with Doyle as an actor than a writer—he appeared in *The Shape of Things* last fall at the Citadel and got a Sterling nomination in 2003 for his work in the Fringe production of *The Zoo Story*—but he's contributed a whole bunch of funny, offbeat short plays to collective productions like *A Taste of Bedlam* back in January. "[Winning the award] makes me feel like not as much of a pretender as a playwright," Doyle says. "When I got out of theatre school, I didn't feel right about calling myself an actor for three more years. Only now can I say, 'Yeah, I'm an actor.' Now, with this award, maybe I can start calling myself a playwright."

Bring the noise

As you can tell from the pullout in the centre of this week's issue of *Vue Weekly*, the 12th annual **Carnival of Shrieking Youth** begins this weekend. We'll have a full preview of the festival, a celebration of theatre, music and visual arts created by Edmonton teens, in next week's issue, but here are some of the more intriguing-sounding productions taking place this week.

The play with the most epic ambitions at this year's COSY is probably Roland Hung's *Fallen*, which boasts a cast of 34 actors and a storyline that depicts nothing less than Lucifer's rebellion and eventual banishment at the hand of God. Next to that, a show like Jason Magee's *In the Belly of a Whale* (about four people trapped in an elevator) can't help but seem a little small-scale, but who knows? With that premise, Magee might have another *No Exit* on his hands. I'm also intrigued by Angela Wight's *Illusions*, which deals with two sisters, one of whom has been brought up to be a cultured intellectual, the other to be a superficial society princess, all as part of an insidious parental experiment in social engineering.

Don't like newsprint? Complete information about the festival is also available online at www.theatresquared.com.



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Caution: Fresh paint

Latitude 53 provides emerging artists with much needed showcase

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

There's not a great deal that gets me angry. But the one thing that does ignite my inner flames is the lack of support for emerging artists. The only major event in Edmonton that encourages young artists was not even organized by the visual arts community; it took the theatre community to establish the NextFest Festival. Commercial galleries (with the

notable exception of Douglas Udell) take little responsibility for fostering new and experimental art. The Alberta Biennial, put on by the Edmonton Art Gallery, could have used this forum for showcasing a diversity of new work, but chooses instead to mostly recycle a stable of tried and true artists. The FAB Gallery at the U of A dutifully exhibits all of the graduating students, but as soon as

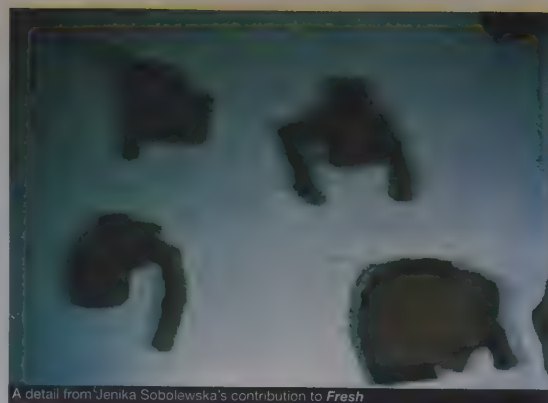
down a gallery where shows by graduates could have taken place.

And it isn't just the institutions that are at fault; established local artists rarely take it upon themselves to do studio visits or mentor the younger generation in the way that, for example, Winnipeg artists have done for years. Perhaps Alberta's right-wing political slant has imperceptibly permeated even our visual arts community. It's survival of the fittest, and the most vulnerable (and sometimes the best) slither back into the anonymity that they emerged from.

So it was with a sigh of relief that I received an invitation from Latitude 53 to *Fresh*, a group show curated by Todd Janes and featuring the work of Hri Neil, Tim Rechner, Gabriela

PREVIEW VISUAL ARTS

they're out of the system they are abandoned to their own devices. No follow-up shows regularly review the progress of graduates. Grant MacEwan College takes even less responsibility for its fine art grads: it closed



A detail from Jenika Sobolewska's contribution to *Fresh*

Rosende, Jana Hargarten and Jenika Sobolewska, which the artists have jokingly dubbed the "Edmonton Emerging Artists Biennial." "I wanted to do a survey show, to show the work that's happening in Edmonton now," Janes says. "I feel very proud to be able to show these artists. A lot of them have been in cafés. It's good to have them in a gallery space where they are paid a fee."

But beyond providing a showcase for young local talent, Janes had a primary reason for putting on this show: it deliberately coincides with two major graduating shows in the city, the BFA show and the graduating exhibition at Grant MacEwan College. "When people are faced with graduation," Janes says, "it's daunting. You're not sure if you're going to produce work again. It's really hard to be an artist. I was interested in what is the evolution that happens between when students graduate, when they leave school; how they discover their artistic identity."

THE WORK JANES SELECTED has evolved far from the traditional format of local graduating shows—it's as if these young artists took wing after the rigour of assignments was well past them. "Subconsciously, I found myself selecting work that's very different than the predominant aesthetic of the university," Janes says. There are only two paintings, both by Hargarten, that refer back to the traditional stretched canvas. And even those question the very foundations of art, commenting on traditional painting in a tongue-in-cheek way. "Painting has been declared dead," suggests Hargarten's artist statement. She bases her work on photography, but not your usual art photography. She takes mundane and awkward family snapshots, the kind we all cringe at, and turns them into art.

The rest of the exhibiting artists

also stretch our definition of visual art. The gallery resounds with eerie sound effects from two video installations by Rosende and Neil: Rosende's husky, erotic voice beckons the viewer into the inner sanctum of a dark, silky enclosure, while Neil's poetic commentaries on urban and natural environments echo through the gallery space like a voice in a dream, guiding us into a room of two superimposed videos. Sobolewska and Rechner surprise us by taking their traditional drawings and prints and displaying them in unpredictable ways. Sobolewska's minute and intimate cut-out prints of undressing figures seem isolated and almost trapped as they lie scattered against a large wall. Meanwhile, Rechner's gestural drawings—which could have been made in any respectable art class—are laid out as a dynamic wall-sized mosaic.

As intriguing and encouraging as the work of these five artists may be, this show is more significant than any single group of individuals. *Fresh* is one small step toward ensuring that our generation of young artists doesn't drown in urban anonymity. Every gallery and institution in town should take it upon themselves to hold such a show annually. With such community support, even the indignities of working in dingy basements and the perennial struggle for survival would not hold emerging artists back. "In order for us as a city to grow, [to have a place] where artists can take risks and grow, we have to do more of this," Janes concludes. "If we are strong as a community, how can individual artists not become stronger because of it?"

FRESH

By Hri Neil, Tim Rechner, Gabriela Rosende, Jana Hargarten, Jenika Sobolewska • Latitude 53 • To May 14

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Kristene Miller BORDERLINE

May 6 - June 12, 2004

Emotion Foundation for the Arts



free will astrology

By **ROB BREZSNY**

ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 18

I suggest you enlist the help of a Jewish fairy godmother. If you can't find a good candidate in your own neighbourhood, check out the feisty saint at www.yourjewishfairygodmother.com. Though I don't know her and can't vouch for her services, I like how she says she "combines a New Age soul with old world wisdom, East Coast savvy and West Coast mellow," and "has black belts in schmoozing, manipulation and chutzpah." That sounds just right for your current needs, Aries. At this juncture in your noble struggle, you need to be nagged and sweet-talked, prodded and praised. If you get too much tough love or too much tender sympathy, you'll keep missing the point about your problem. But you'll be perfectly motivated if you receive a blend of both.

TAURUS Apr 20 - May 20

Welcome to the first horoscope in history that relies entirely on the colours of Crayola crayons for its metaphors. To what do you owe such an honour? Simple, Taurus: After a dizzy cruise through the midnight blue and burnt umber parts of the spectrum, you're now awash with a kaleidoscope of flashier hues ranging from pink flamingo to electric lime to neon carrot. Even wild blue yonder and mango tango are injecting themselves

into the mix. Congrats on this vivid redirection. Where you're headed is more interesting than the yellow brick road. In Crayola-speak, it's more like the banana mania brick road.

GEMINI May 21 - Jun 20

Turn your attention, please, to the predicament of Mohabbatsinh Gohil, a diamond trader in India. A cow swallowed 1,722 diamonds that he had accidentally dropped in the street. By combing through the beast's dung for many days, Gohil was eventually able to recover many of his jewels. I suspect that in the coming weeks, Gemini, you'll encounter a challenge comparable to his. Let's hope you've got the patience, humility and sense of humor to sift through the mounds of dreck in search of small but weighty treasure.

CANCER Jun 21 - July 22

There's only one bad thing about mountain biking in the windy rain: I have to keep my eyelids half-closed and blink constantly to avoid being blinded. But as long as I'm wearing my waterproof parka, the ride is great. Fun. Today I swear I heard the wild irises sing with ecstatic gratitude as they soaked up the downpour. The moist, blooming humus smell of the earth was intoxicating. The raindrops seemed jubilant as they gathered into gushing streams and cascaded down the trails. Because no other humans were crazy enough to be out, I got to exist in some precious alone time with the woods. What's the equivalent of mountain biking in the windy rain for you, Cancerian? What tiny annoyances are outweighed by gleeful benefits? You should pursue those experiences passionately this week.

LEO July 23 - Aug 22

"God is a comedian playing to an audience that is too afraid to laugh," mused 18th-century French philosopher Voltaire. What's ironic, I would add, is that the moment you summon the courage to laugh, God's jokes become tonic rather than cruel. They have a cleansing effect, and often tend to break down the obstacles to your dreams. Are you ready to make the transition, Leo? The planetary omens suggest that you have ripened sufficiently to find the next divine punchline hysterically funny.

According to Wordspy.com, the term pareidolia (pronounced "pay-eye-DOH-lee-uh") refers to "the erroneous or fanciful perception of a pattern or meaning in something that is actually ambiguous or random." Mainstream astronomers say this is the perfect word to describe what rogue researchers have called the "Face on Mars," an evocative plateau in the Cydonia region of the red planet. It's important to note, however, that not all wonders and marvels are the result of pareidolia. For instance, the personal message you think you discern in a billboard or tortilla this week may really be a communication directly from an angel of mercy to you. To distinguish authentic breakthroughs from mere pareidolias, strike a balance between skepticism and open-mindedness. Just because some apparent miracles are frauds doesn't mean they all are.

VIRGO Aug 23 - Sept 22

Your role model in the coming weeks is Latin pop star Julio Iglesias, born on the Virgo-Libra cusp. Though he has sold over 150 million records, he admits that there are thousands of people who are more polished vocalists. "I know I can't really sing properly," he told the German magazine *Bunte*. But he believes it's precisely his lack of perfect technique that makes him so appealing: "My voice has emotion, a style. The best singers can't touch people like I can." If I understand the astrological portents correctly,

LIBRA Sept 23 - Oct 22

Shelley Rothenburger; May 6-June 12; opening reception: May 7 (7-10pm) • **Front Room:** BORDERLINE: Artworks by Kristene Callan; May 6-June 12

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • **SPRING DEBUT:** Artworks by the members of the arts and crafts of Strathcona Place Senior Citizen Centre; May 10-June 1; open house: Wed, May 12 (6:30-8:30pm)

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm; Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by Jim Akerman, Jim Brager, Glenda Beaver, Jack Ellis, Linda Nelson, George Toszack, George Werber. Pwelter by Raymond Cox, bronzes by Gina McDougall-Cohoe • Through May

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Andrew Reisman, Alk Borek, prints by Toll, Edmonton Sky Line prints by Loren Charbot, Photographs of Edmonton River Valley Area by John Johnson • Through May

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St (423-5353) • **PROJEX ROOM: IN-BETWEEN:** Artworks by James Kwong • Until May 14

LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY 455 King Street, Spruce Grove • 2004 ALBERTA COMMUNITY ARTS CLUB ZONE SHOW FOR CENTRAL ALBERTA: Paintings by artists ages 15-18 from central Alberta; May 7 (7-10pm) • May 8, 11-14 (12-5pm); May 15 (12-3pm) • Opening reception: Fri, May 7 (7-10pm)

McMULLIN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • **ALEGRIA:** Paintings and sculptures by Annette Ayre, Carol Hill, Pat Di Marcello, Ingrid Marti, Mary Topping, Jayne Wiloughby Scott and Mary Wright • Until June 20

MCPAG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • **SIC TRANSIT FLORIDA MUNDT (THUS PASSES THE GLORY OF THE WORLD):** Paintings and drawings by Myles MacDonald • May 7-26

MUSEE HERITAGE MUSEUM 5 St, Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm • **SCIENCE ON THE MOVE:** Until June 27 • Open house: Sat, May 1 (1-4pm) • Science: how, what and why. May 15 (1pm)

PROFESSOR'S PUBLIC ART GALLERY 18 Fennell Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm; Thu 10am-6pm • **HIGH ENERGY IX:** Art work by St. Albert's High Schools; May 6-29 • Art wall, opening reception: May 6 (6-9pm) • ArtVentures: For children 6-12; \$2/child; May 15-14pm

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-

Libra, you're most likely to succeed in the coming days if you use Iglesias's approach in your own field of endeavour. Don't let an obsession with flawless execution get in the way of expressing genuine feeling. Emphasize magic over cleverness.

SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Imagine it's 30 years from today. You're looking back at the history of your relationship with desire. You realize that the period of April through August of 2004 stands out as a watershed. That was when you clearly saw that some of your desires were mediocre, inferior and wasteful, while others were beautiful, sacred and invigorating. Beginning then, you made it one of your life goals to purge the former and cultivate the latter. Thereafter, you occasionally wandered down dead ends pursuing goals that weren't worthy of you, but usually you wielded your passions with discrimination and integrity, dedicating them to serve the highest and most interesting good. Right?

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Don't camp next to a forest fire or go on a picnic where mad bulls roam. Okay, Sagittarius? Don't play with matches next to a gasoline pump, either, or fly a kite in a lightning storm, or feed steroids to the monsters under your bed. In fact, I suggest that you take fewer risks than you normally might. Whenever you feel a surge of daredevil energy, turn it inward and direct it at the mental blocks that have been messing with your creativity.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

It's an astrologically favourable time to expand your repertoire of pleasurable activities. The hidden forces of fate will bring you luck and synchronicity when you set aside your familiar old amusements and experi-

ment with fresh ones. For example, whatever your favourite sexual positions or techniques are, you should consider retiring them for a couple of weeks while you branch out. Same with desserts, intoxicants, games and getaways: try anything different at least once. Drink some of that new chocolate beer. Get stroked by two massage therapists simultaneously. Schedule a singing lesson on a mountaintop or a flying lesson in your dreams.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 18

Is there anything more dangerous than getting up in the morning and having nothing to worry about, no problems to solve, no friction to heat you up? That state can be a threat to your health because, if left untreated, it incites an unconscious yearning for any old dumb trouble that might generate some excitement. I'm concerned that you might fall into this trap in the coming week, Aquarius. To ensure that you don't, go hunt down some useful and fascinating trouble as soon as possible.

PISCES Feb 19 - Mar 20

Late last year, DJ Danger Mouse made a record that blended vocals from rap star Jay-Z's *Black Album* with instrumental tracks lifted from the Beatles' *White Album*. The result, which he called the *Grey Album*, was praised by *Rolling Stone* as "the ultimate remix record" and "an ingenious hip-hop record that sounds oddly ahead of its time." Your assignment in the coming weeks, Pisces, is to join together seemingly unrelated elements to create a combination that's as interesting and innovative as Danger Mouse's. There's one way I hope you'll effort will be different from his, however. Because he didn't have authorization to use the Beatles' material, the *Grey Album* can never be commercially released. Your work, on the other hand, should be legal, kosher and karmically impeccable. ●

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

BRINGING YOU THE WORLD Westbury Theatre, Arts Bams, 84 Ave, 104 St (454-3739) • Presented by Vinok Wondrance • May 13-15 (8pm) • \$22 (adult)/\$18 (student/senior)

PROFOUND BABIES-A SOPHISTICATED REVUE Kassa Theatre, Jubilee Auditorium, 1455-87 Ave (944-9115/420-1757) • Dance, musical theatre and more presented by Kompany! • May 20-30 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

RODA DE CAPOEIRA The Capoeira Academy, 6807-104 St (709-3500) • A free performance of a Brazilian mix of dance, martial arts and percussion • Every Sat (2-3pm)

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611/4808-5900) • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm (closed all hols) • **Discovery Gallery: IMAGE SERVES THE TECHNIQUE:** Hot glass and metal artworks by Martha Nique; until May 16 • **A WOMAN'S PLACE:** Textiles by Sanna Kaiser; until May 16 • **HIGH TEA WITH A TWIST:** Special event, music by harpist Tracy Brown; May 16 (2pm); \$25; tickets available at Alberta Craft Council

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St, Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • Paintings by Andrew Rzewski • Opening reception: May 6 (6-9pm)

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd floor, Knol Building, 10217-106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pedersen, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende, Greg Swain, Anna Szul, Eugene Uhuad and guests

BLACK GOLD GALLERY AND FRAME 4724-50 Ave, Leduc (986-6393) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm • Featuring mixed media artworks by Arthur Evoy (1924-2003) as well as prints of various artists artworks • Through May

CHRISTIE BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9621 Whyte Ave (439-6335) • Open: Mon-Fri 11am-5pm, Sat, by appointment • **JANNA:** Fabric art

and copper enameling works by Jane Bergstrom • Until May 14

DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • **BLOND WITH DARK ROOTS:** Paintings by Nataka Huxar • May 8-22 • Opening reception: Sat, May 8 (2-4pm)

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-6pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • Ken Macdonald: until June 6 • **FIELD NOTES:** Artworks by the O'Flanagan brothers; until June 6 • **Kitchen Gallery:** TIDAL TRACE: A multimedia installation by Lyndal Osborn and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Children's Gallery: SPELLBOUND:** until Jan. 2005 • A Visit with Artist Tom O'Flanagan: Thu, May 20; exhibition tour with Tom O'Flanagan (6pm); slide lecture in theatre (7pm) • \$8 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior), \$4 (children 6-12)/free (member/children 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open: Wed-Fri 10am-5:30pm; Sat 10am-4pm, closed long weekends • **NEW WORKS:** Paintings by Kate More • Until May 29

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl, 8303-112 St • **MUCH** 112: Artworks by Pearl Westfall • Until May 12

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, FINE Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **ALL DRESSED:** Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate show • Until May 8

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-9pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings, Inuks by G. Arluk, Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by M. Tallo • Through May

FRINGE GALLERY 85mt 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm **FAMILIAR RINGS:** Paintings by Carol Wylie • Until May 31 • Opening reception: Sat, May 6 (2-4pm)

GALLERY DE JONGE 27022A Hwy 16A, Spruce Grove (962-9505) • Open Tue-Hwy 11pm, anytime by appointment • Work by local artists Beth Gaulais, Earl Cummins, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **AM I GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, SEX, FOOD?** Artworks by

102 Ave (453-9100) • Open: Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • **THROUGH THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE:** Embroidery traditions and high craftsmanship of women from Gujarat, India, until June 6 • **IN THE SHADOW OF VOLCANOS:** Indonesian artworks, until June 6 • **WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN? HEALING THE LEGACY OF THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS:** May 7-Aug. 2 • **BIG THINGS 3:** Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; May 8-Mar. 29 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES' CLAY:** Spans 11,000 years and 50 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • **Spotlight Gallery: EVERY MOTHER'S FEAR. ALBERTA'S POLO EXPERIENCE:** until Sept. 12 • **The Natural History Gallery:** • **BUG ROOM:** Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY:** Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH:** Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY:** Permanent exhibit • Wild Alberta every weekend.

Presentations start at 1 pm and 2 pm • **TIME TRAVELLERS LECTURES:** Following the *Shadows of the Great One-Western Canada's Early Explorers* with Dr. Heinz Pyszczyk; May 6 • Admission is half price Sat and Sun (9-11am)

RED STRAP ART MARKET 10305-97 St (497-2211) • Open: Tue-Sun 11am-5pm • Artworks by various artists and artisans

ST. ALBERT'S ART WALK • May 6 (6-9pm) • **Pygmalion School Of Fine Art,** 44 St. Thomas Street, Artworks by Lynn Orms • **The Bookstore on Perrow,** 7 Perron Street; Paintings by Sonia Volpe, Henry Edwards, Carol Rose • **Modern Eyes Gallery:** 24 Perron Street; Floral paintings by Bridgit Turner • **Profiles,** 19 Perron Street; artworks by St. Albert High Schools; St. Albert Painters' Guild will be creating artworks in front of the gallery • **Art Boat Gallery,** 26 St. Anne Street; Gempert 118, St. Anne Street; paintings by Andrew Rzewski

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **NEW WORKS:** landscape paintings and still life paintings by Jacqueline Stiehl; May 8-25 • Opening reception: Sat, May 8 (2-4pm)

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • **HOW TO BECOME A MIRROR:** SNAP membership show • Until May 22

SNOWBIRD GALLERY W&M, 8882-170 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY Centre for Reading and the Arts • **MILLENNIUM IN A BOX:** Handmade books, a conceptual interpretation of

where the millennium is leading by Canadian artists; until June 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • **FACES AND DOUGS:** Artworks by Alandra Allenbright, Bruce Allen, Doug Fraser, Susanne Loucks, Mary Lee Small, Helen Smith, Bruce Thompson, Pat Wagnessville • Until June 26

STUDIO 321 Rice Howard Way, 10168-100A St (424-6746) • Open: Sat-Sun 1-4pm • **THE FATHER-SUN EXHIBIT:** Landscapes, florals, portraits by Marc Munn and sculptures by Justin Munn

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • **PLATINUM PERCEPTIONS:** Photographs by Alan King; May 6-June 12 • Opening reception: May 6 (7:30-9:30pm)

VANDERLEE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • **SWAN LAKE:** Oil paintings by Emily Bickell • Until May 18

WILLOWOOD GALLERY AND STUDIO 2700 St, Willowood, (780) 325-3904 • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm, or by appt • Metal, wood relief, and clay sculptures by Pat Di Marcello and others artists • Through May

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Fl, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122 ext. 226) • Open: Mon-Fri 12-5pm • **THE WORKERS ART SHOW:** until May 8

ZOCALO 10826-95 St (428-0754) • **EMERGENCE: A BLOOMING ART SHOW:** Drawings by Jessica Hiemstra-van der Horst • Until May 9

LITERARY

AUDREY'S BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Reading by Marilyn Bowring from her new novel, *The Cat's Pinnymage*; Fri, May 7 (7:30pm) • Reading by Heather Spears from her latest work of poetry and prose; Tue, May 11 (7:30pm) • Reading by Shauna Singh Baldwin from her upcoming novel, *The Tiger Claw*; Thu, May 13 (7:30pm) • Ted Barris presents his new book, *Jonas: Consonants of D-Day*; June 6, 1944; Fri, May 14 (7:30pm) • Reading by Chris Fisher from his new short fiction collection *Third and Long*; reading by Larry Gaspar from his new collection of stories *Princess Waiting*; Mon, May 17 (7:30pm) • Reading by Holly Luhn from *Swey*; reading by Titty Farley from her new book, *Stirring Oat*; Wed, May 19 (7:30pm) • Matthew Jackson talks about his new book *The Canada Chronicles: A Four-Year Hitchhiking Odyssey*; Fri, May 21 (noon) • Reading by Carmen Rodriguez; Fri,

May 21 (7:30pm)

ROBERTSON-WESLEY CHURCH, MEMORIAL HALL (1029-123 St (433-1830)) • Regenerating Heart, Land and Livelihood • Storyteller Noel McLaughlin • Fri, May 7 (7:30-9pm)

STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY Centre for Reading and Arts (496-7066) • Voices Unheard: Open mic event for teens to read their stories, poetry, essays, or sing • Sat, May 8 (1-2pm sign-up) • Free

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CENTRE Rm 2-47, 8303-112 St • Reading by Singh Baldwin from her upcoming novel, *The Tiger Claw*; Fri, May 14 (noon) • David Staples and Greg Southam play tribute to Barb Tarbox and launch their new book, *Barb's Arcade: How Barb Tarbox Turned Her Deadly Crime Into A Life Saving Crusade*; Thu, May 20 (7pm)

WHITEHORN CROSSING LIBRARY THEATRE 4211-106 St (420-1757) • *Say It With Story* Presented by T.A.L.E.S. Edmonton • Stories told in the oral tradition by local storytellers and are chosen for adults or older children • May 13 (7pm) • \$10/\$25 (family pass) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4990) • Rob Trick; May 6-8 • Will Davis; May 14-15 • Tim Kido; May 21-22
FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Improv

EVENTS WEEKLY

For your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

BISHOP JOHN SHELBY SPONG Sherwood Park United Church, 20 St, Sherwood Park (481-8400/420-1757) • Presented by the Spiritual Living Centre of Edmonton. Bishop Spong will be discussing his books *Born of a Woman: The Virgin Birth and the Treatment of Women in a Male Dominated Church* and *A New Christianity for a New World: Why Traditional Faith is Dying and How a New Faith is Being Born* in the second session • May 15 (3pm-5pm and 7:30-9:30pm) • \$35 (single session/\$50 (combined sessions) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square, the Spiritual Living Centre

THE CONVENT: LIFE AND COMMUNITY St. George's Anglican Church, 1173-87 Ave (438-5976) • *Courageous Athletes: Grey Nuns in the Great North-West* presented by Patricia Demers with Photography in the Convent, a visual presentation by Colleen Skidmore • Thu, May 6 (7:30pm)

EDMONTON ART GALLERY THEATRE, Sir Winston Churchill Sq • A Visit with artist Tom O'Flanagan Tour with Tom O'Flanagan and 7pm slide lecture in theatre • Thu, May 20 (6pm)

EDMONTON ASSOCIATION FOR BRIGHT CHILDREN Sun Room, Alberta School for the Deaf, 6240-113 St (434-8846) • Brighter Horizons Adult Education Series: Update on gifted education in Edmonton Public Schools • Sat, May 15 (10am-

comedy • Every Sun

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St (481-2786) • Comedy Mondays With Yuk Yuls on Tour

RED'S WEN (481-6420) • Hypno Sundays • 9:30pm • Wayne Lee; May 9; Free • Edmonton premiere of Wayne Lee's documentary *The Deeper You Go* followed by hypnosis show; Sun, May 9 (8pm)

THEATRE

CARNIVAL OF SHRIEKING YOUTH • Transalta Arts Bams (499-1271) www.theatresquared.com • Theatre Squared's 12th annual festival devoted to plays, play readings, concerts and visual arts exhibitions created and performed by dozens of emerging Edmontonian teen artists. See www.theatresquared.com for a full schedule of events • May 6-24

CAROUSEL Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Rodgers and Hammerstein's tear-jerking musical adaptation of Ferenc Molnár's play *Lolom*, about an irresponsible carnival Barker who is allowed to return from the dead for one day and try to repay the lives of the wife and teenaged daughter he left behind • Until July 4 • Tickets available at Mayfield Dinner Theatre box office

CHIMPPOVI Varcona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month
DIALOGUE AND REBUTTAL Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A Campus, 87 Ave, 112 St (492-2495) •

noon) • Free

FAIR TRADE CONCEPTS Ten Thousand Villages (433-09) • Fair Trade Day: Information, samples • Sat, May 8 (10am-5pm)

FOLLOWING THE SHADOWS OF THE GREAT ONES: WESTERN CANADA'S EARLY EXPLORERS Provincial Museum Theatre (453-9100) • Lecture presented by Dr. Heinz Pyszyk • Thu, May 6 (7pm) • \$8

KARMA TASHI LING TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • *Lojong (Mind Training) Tale* series meeting every Wed (7:30pm)

NATURE CONSERVANCY Mountain Equipment Co-op, 1228-102 Ave (488-6614 ext. 231) • Slide show about local areas the Nature Conservancy is protecting • Mon, May 10 (7:30pm) • Free

RECREATION FACILITY MASTER PLAN (496-8233) • Public meetings to view and to voice your opinions on the master plan • **Central Lions Senior Citizens Recreation Centre**, 1113-113 St • May 10 (7-9pm) • **City Arts Centre**, 10943-84 Ave, Tue, May 11 (7-9pm) www.edmonton.ca

THE ROLE OF SMALL BUSINESS IN COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Alhambra Books, 10115-81 Ave • Malcolm Azania hosts a mid-morning conversation with members of the business community • May 11 (11am-noon)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling Invitations: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of

Presented by Studio Theatre • Goesta Stravander-Dencher directs Beth Graham and Jonathan Christenson in Nobel Prize-winning author Gao Xingjian's philosophical two-hander about a man and a woman who furiously debate the nature of life, death, sex and loneliness following a passionate sexual encounter • May 13-22 (6pm), preview: Wed, May 12, matinee: Thu, May 21 (12:30pm), no show Sunday, May 16 • \$8-20 • Tickets available at Timms Centre box office

DEE-NASTY Varcona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Jeff Haskin, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Keir, Josh Dean, Davina Stewart and Leona Brausen celebrate 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

AN EVENING OF ONE-ACTS Waterdale Playhouse, 10322-83 Ave (439-2845/420-1757) • A collection of one-act plays about bumpy love affairs and jealous boyfriends and girlfriends, featuring *Run Chew* by Mark Stubbings, *Double Occupancy* by Blaine Newton and *Kestminded* by Michael Healey and Kate Lynch • Until May 8 (8pm) • \$5 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM Kaasa Theatre, basement Jubilee Auditorium (420-1757) • Presented by ELOPE Musical Theatre • Stephen Sondheim's classic musical about a great, convincing actor whose master promises to grant him his freedom if he can arrange for the woman he loves to marry him instead of the vain soldier his father has promised her • May 6-8 (7:30pm), May 9 (2pm), May 13, 15, 16 (7:30pm) • \$21.50 (adult)/\$16.50 (students/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Khusok Phanchok of Narayana Monastery in India • Every Tues (7pm): beginners • Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm): advanced

TIME TRAVELLERS XI Provincial Museum, 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • *Following the Shadows of the Great Ones—Western Canada's Early Explorers* with Dr. Heinz Pyszyk • May 6

UPWARD BOUND TOASTMASTERS Baker Centre, 10th Fl., 10025-106 St (477-2613) • Every Wed (7pm): Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership skills

A VISIT WITH ARTIST TOM O'FLANAGAN Edmonton Art Gallery, Sir Winston Churchill Sq • Exhibition tour and slide lecture with Tom O'Flanagan • Thu, May 20 (6pm)

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION • Bonnie Doon Recycle, 85 St, 85 Ave (469-1949) Free guided hike, approx. 10 km at Bonington Lake, May 9 (9am) • (478-5622) Free guided hike, approx. 10 km at Hastings Lake, May 16 (9am) • (467-1414) Free guided hike, approx. 10 km at Hastings Lake, May 23 (9am) • **Southgate Mall**, SE Corner, 111 St, Whitemud Rd (433-7000) Free guided hike, approx. 10 km at Mutttaggart Sanctuary, May 30 (9am)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725B Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip shows, go-go boys • Every Mon. Free pool, DJ Arrow Chatter, Jeffy Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbian Catholics and friends.

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay, lesbian and bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMO) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 1024, 10242-105 St (448-1766) • www.icarealberta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCC Suite 45, 9912-106 St • Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a

able at TIX on the Square

LATER LIFE Varcona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (434-5564/420-1757) • Presented by Shadow Theatre • John Hudson directs Michele Brown, David Ley, Davina Stewart and John Sproule in *The Dining Room*, playwright A.R. Gurney's rueful comedy/drama about a pessimistic middle-aged man who strikes up a conversation with an old flame at a party and begins wondering if rekindling their romance is still a possibility • Until May 9, Tue (8pm): \$10; Wed, Thu (8pm), Sun (2pm): \$15 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior); Fri-Sat (8pm) \$20 (adult)/\$16 (student/senior); Sat (2pm): pay-what-you-can • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

THE PIRATE GHOST OF CAPTAIN SMUG Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Oasis Entertainment Hall, 11303 Fort Rd (448-9339) • The crew of the pirate ship Smugg's set sail in search of buried treasure in this swashbuckling adventure, packed with music, swordfights and mermaids • Until May 9, Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) • Tickets range from \$34.95-\$49.95/\$20 (children 12 and under)

THE SOUND OF MUSIC The Citadel, Shocor Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Tom Wood directs Rodgers and Hammerstein's family musical about the romance that blossoms between an emotionally fragile Austrian baron and the nonconformist, guitar-strumming nun he hires to act as governess for his seven children • June 6 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

SPIRITS OF THE ORPHEUM Leduc Performing Art Centre, 4308-50 St, Leduc (985-0278) • Presented by the Leduc Drama Society proudly • Songs from *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cats* and *Phantom*

supportive environment (fall and winter terms). Contact Kris Wells (kwells@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Wintonham (mwintonham@ualberta.ca) for info • www.ualberta.ca/~ced/peil/kappa/verdana.htm

LAUREL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Gernau United Church, 11148-48 Ave (474-0733) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/livpos (488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society. Peer-facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0903) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.gocities.com/makingwaves.html • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church service

OUT IS IN (429-0767) • A youth arts project about LGBT issues, addressing the needs of youth in schools and in the community • For more info www.ualberta.ca/~outin/outin@ualberta.ca

PRAG GLCC, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5598) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month (7:30pm) • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transsexuals

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • TUE: Hot Butt Contest (8pm-midnight) with DJ Janey • WED: Amateur strip with Weena Lu, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • THU: Rotating shows: Laddona's review, Rick's open stage and the Weakest Link game section and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • FRI: **Upstairs:** Euro Blitz New European music with DJ Outwack, DJ Jazzy and male stripper **Downstairs:** female stripper • SAT: Every Sat like new years • **Upstairs:** Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, new music with DJ Dan and Mike **Downstairs:** Retro music • SUN: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bash; every week long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu 31 (member/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat 34 (member)/\$6 (non-member), Sun \$2

TRANSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP www.transall.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thu 1-12; Fri-Sat 1-3 • Gay nightclub. Every Wed (7-12am): Karaoke with Tizzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chatter • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCC), 45, 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.youthunderstanding.com • Every Sat (7-9pm) • A facilitated social support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

of the Opera are featured in this musical rebus about a young man who inherits the legendary Orpheum Theatre and finds that it is haunted by the spirits of the characters from the great musicals that were once performed there • May 6-8, May 13-15 (8pm) • \$10 (Thu)/\$12 (Fri-Sat) • Tickets available at Leduc Public Library

THE SPITFIRE GRILL La Cité Francophone, 8627-101 St (422-7575) • Presented by Leave it to Jane Theatre • May 14-23 (8pm, 2pm Sun matinee) • \$18 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior/Equity) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

THEATRESPOTS Varcona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (10pm) • Tickets available by phone 3... • 21 11315-106 Ave (454-0583) •

Presented by Azimuth Theatre • Two lifelong buddies get drunk, do drugs and share childhood memories while mourning the death of a mutual friend in this intense comedy/drama written and performed by Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckoo • May 7-23 • Tickets available by phone at 454-0583

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE The Citadel, Shocor Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Glasgow's TAG Theatre presents their acclaimed stage version of Maurice Sendak's beloved children's book about a boy who dreams of being crowned king of the monsters after he is sent to bed without dinner • Until May 9 • \$15 (adult)/\$12 (child) • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALL STAR HIP HOP COMPETITION Stars Talent Club, 10551-82 Ave (445-2323) • Hip hop talent show presented by Captain Abdul • Sun, May 23, 8pm (door), 9:30pm (show)

BALL OF THE WILD-DESTINATION GREECE Westin Hotel (455-7181) • Champagne reception, buffet, live entertainment, live and silent auction, with dancing to follow, fundraiser for the Canadian Cancer Society • Sat, May 8 (6pm auction, 7pm dinner) • \$125 (25 tax receipt)

CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOCIATION Rundle Park and Rundle Centre • CP 100 Bike-together: Teams will compete on stationary and recreational bikes • Sat, May 15 (10am) • Register: 1-800-363-2807 or www.cpalberta.org

CHINESE CULTURE VARIETY SHOW Victoria School for Performing Arts (424-8124) • Fundraiser for a Chinese library • May 9 (7pm) • \$50 (VIP/\$15 (general)

EXPERIENCE SOUTH EAST ASIA Convocation Hall, U of A Campus (953-6309) • May 7 (6pm) • \$10 (adv)/\$15 (door) • Tickets available at SUM info booth

GREAT HUMAN RACE U of A Butterdome, www.greatrace.com • Walk or run sponsored by the United Way • Sat, May 8 • Pre-register

KITCH'N CULINA SATURDAY NIGHT St. Vital's Senior Center, Beaumont (929-8558/786-1796) • A night of Celtic music and food • May 8 • \$15

LICK THIST Urban Lounge, 8103-105 St • Presented by Dreamspeakers Festival Society • Fundraiser featuring Darkhorse with Clay Rookes • May 6 (9pm) • \$7 (door)

MALAYSIA-RHYTHMS AND ARTS MacLab Theatre, Citadel's Lee Pavilion, 9828-101A Ave (1-888-689-6872) • An evening of music, dance and an insider's travel presentation on Malaysia featuring Randy Rene Reusch (saxophone music, Thu, May 13 (7pm) • \$10 (senior/student/child) • Tickets available at any Travel Outlets office in Edmonton

MAYWEEK LABOUR ARTS FESTIVAL • www.mayweek.ab.ca • Until May 9 • **Stanley A. Miller Library** All We Worked For: 100 Years of Canadian Workers' History, Until May 20 • **Sacred Heart School**, 9624-108 Ave • Edmonton's National Fair featuring Fair Trade Merchandise, pre-sales and film screenings • Wed, May 12 (4-9pm) • Free

THE RESEA COMME CHAMPAGNE LUNCHEON Fairmont Hotel MacDonald, Empire Ballroom (482-0198) • Proceeds go to the 24-hour distress line and to help with counselling program of the Support Network • Fri, May 7 (1-3pm)

WATERWALKER Metro Cinema, 2614 44th Ave, Citadel Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (488-6614 ext. 231) • Canada's film festival on canoeing, kayaking, and the conservation of waterways • Thu, May 13 (7pm) • \$8 (adv)/\$10 (door) • 6:30pm (door), 7pm (show)



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Stride. A drawing and walking fundraising event to
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4180/e-mail: harcourt@telusplanet.net

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Marko (780) 454-3739
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A Visit with Artist Tom O'Flanagan, Thursday,
May 20 6 pm Exhibition Tour with Tom
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All alumni of the City Arts Centre are invited to
exhibit their artwork in the show "Artists
Discoveries 2004" May 28-30. **Deadline May 14.**
Ph 486-5893 for info

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volunteers

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alt sex column

By ANDREA NEMERSON

Beating me to the punch

Dear Readers:

I was checking my website stats this morning and I noticed that "donkey punch Cleveland steamer" was once again among the most popular search terms bringing new readers to my page. Although I am still puzzled and disconcerted by the public's apparently endless fascination with this topic, I thought I would give you the original "donkey punch" column and some of the follow-up discussion, and remind you not to blame me should you become faint. I don't make this stuff up.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

A friend recently told me that during butt-sex, if the guy punches the girl in the back of the head it will make her vomit and defecate at the same time. Is this true? And why would anyone want to do this?

Love, Troubled

Dear Trouble:

What? What?? Why would anyone want to do this, indeed? Come to think of it, why did your friend even tell you this to begin with? I mean, does this sort of thing come up in ordinary conversation? And one more question: does this friend have a girlfriend?

It seems most unlikely, but I have no idea if it's true. I sincerely hope nobody gets it into his head to try it and tell me how it goes.

A far, far more likely scenario is this: guy punches girl in the back of the head during butt-sex, girl pulls away, turns and punches guy in the face, gets dressed and leaves.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

Regarding "Troubled's" recent question about punching a girl in the back of the head during "butt sex": one summer, over a spirited round of drinking games, a Harvard football player told us about this practice, which he named a "donkey punch." According to this Crimson Pervert, knocking the woman unconscious causes the sphincter to loosen, allowing deeper penetration. This was met, understandably, with uncomfortable silence and a general averting of eyes. No mention was made of defecation or vomiting, although they sound like not-unlikely side effects of

cold-cocking an unsuspecting partner.

Neither he nor anyone present ever attempted a donkey punch, so far as I know. The same can not be said for a "Cleveland steamer," another bit of sexual arcane he added to our collective lexicon that afternoon.

Yours, Troubled by Harvard Student

Dear Troubled:

Would it make you feel better about Harvard (albeit worse about mankind in general) to hear that "donkey punch" is not, apparently, of Crimson Pervert origin? It appears that the phrase has been making the rounds, if my inbox is any indication. Anyway, ick.

I don't know whether to be relieved or alarmed, but a quick search turns up evidence that "Cleveland steamer," a practice that, if anything, is even more disgusting than the donkey punch, was likewise not invented by your churlish friend. And that is absolutely the last thing I intend to say about any of this.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

I am so angry that you did not mention in your discussion of the "donkey punch" that this type of activity is not some kind of "icky" fetish but falls into the category of assault and rape. I am disappointed that you never mentioned that once someone is unconscious, all sexual activity becomes nonconsensual. I would like you to issue an apology to your readers for your lack of appropriate responsibility as a journalist.

Love, Another Woman Against Abuse of Women

Dear Woman:

And I am so angry about those poor bon-sai kittens! Imagine: being raised in a beer glass, never to eviscerate catnip mice or pounce on their owners' toesies early in the morning.... It's so mean! And isn't it too painful even to contemplate the fate of innocent companion rodents forced to perform despicable acts with aging Hollywood Buddhists? I don't know how you can get all exercised over violence to adult women, who, after all, can take care of themselves, while not sparing a tear for the poor little helpless furry ones.

Honey, get over it. There's no such thing as a "donkey punch." If it were, I promise you I'd be against it too.

Love, Andrea

So there you have it. If you missed these letters the first time and are, against all odds, in possession of some sort of proof that the "donkey punch" is in fact a real, live (if disgusting) sexual variation, do let me know.

On second thought, nah. Let me live on in peaceful ignorance.

Love, Andrea @

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.

volunteers

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in need of volunteers to help in our office with reception and other light office duties. For more information call Belinda 423-4102.

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BY JENNY FENIAK • 30

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A large photograph of an Edmonton Trappers pitcher in mid-pitch, wearing a white uniform with "Trappers" on the sleeve and a dark cap. The background is a blurred stadium scene.

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ON THE COVER

Aerosmith and Eric Clapton are both enjoying hit records these days with blues tribute albums. Anything that celebrates this distinctively American artform is probably a good thing, but maybe it's time people paid more attention to the work of Fat Possum Records, who are desperately trying to preserve the sounds of authentic, unsung blues musicians like T-Model Ford before they disappear forever • 30

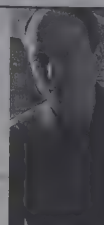
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Uneasy bedfellows

Ranchers, farmers grow wary of Alberta's plan to harvest coalbed methane

By PHIL DUPERRON

With the price and demand for natural gas soaring, Alberta is taking its first cautious steps towards harvesting coalbed methane. As of December 2003, there were 1,000 wells in the province, 300 of them already exploiting the controversial new energy source. Many more are in the works, and concerned landowners across the province are eager for more information about what it

could all mean to them.

Coalbed methane (CBM)—or natural gas from coal, the more politically-correct-sounding name adopted by the Alberta government—is gas trapped within seams of coal, often saturated with fresh or saline water. In order to extract it, the water must be pumped away to depressurize the coal so the gas can be removed. It's a costly process,

American consumers.

While CBM exploration is new in Canada, it's been going on for more than a decade in the U.S., where it now accounts for eight per cent of the country's annual natural gas production. But this productivity has come at a huge price to landowners and the environment. In the American Midwest, complaints have ranged from drained or contaminated wells to faucets that spew flammable methane. Thousands of wells and roads have scarred vast landscapes, ruined wildlife habitats and contaminated drinking and irrigation water. Billions of barrels of byproduct water (often high in sodium, arsenic and other contaminants) are being dumped on the surface and into rivers. On top of all that, the density

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is like a day planner
for activists

By CHRIS BOUTET

As those involved in the activist community know, trying to effect some change in our society can sometimes seem like an insurmountable and thankless task. The work is tiring, it's time-consuming, and often it can seem that despite your best efforts, your message just isn't reaching people. It's a reality that Edmonton activist Mike Hudema knows all too well, but it's one that he hopes to change with the release of his book, *An Action a Day Keeps Global Capitalism Away*.

"There are a lot of challenges facing activists in Edmonton today, and we're in a position right now where there are so many problems and the problems are so big that lots of people feel pretty powerless against them; it feels really difficult to get the message out," explains Hudema, a law student at the University of Alberta and a longtime standout in the activist community. "Most of our media is corporately owned and isn't interested in getting our message out—and if they do print it, it gets spun pretty badly.

There seem to be so many obstacles, but at the end of the day, these things need to be done and these issues need to be spoken out about."

In order to help people get past these obstacles, Hudema and co-authors Shannon Phillips and Karen Munroe have compiled a list of 52 creative and proven-effective actions—one for every week of the year—that activists can use in order to get their message out there. Each action, Hudema explains, is broken down into three parts: the first deals with how the action actually works and what sort of campaign it was used on; a second explains why you

ACTIVISM

would perform this action, what it can add to a campaign and what types of things you need to watch out for; and the third lays out the nuts and bolts of the action. The result, Hudema says, is a comprehensive guidebook that will greatly improve any activist campaign.

"Basically," he says, "we looked at Alberta and Edmonton and we saw a lot of problems. We saw that, despite opinion poll after opinion poll showing that Albertans want public healthcare and a better education system and to protect the environment, government and corporate policy was to tear down these things. So we tried

to come up with ways to start campaigns and bring some change and say [to the government] that the people of this province who you're supposed to represent want something different.

"We don't want tuition rates that have increased by over 225 per cent, we don't want a private healthcare system," Hudema continues. "So how can we begin to change that? Over the years, we've done a lot of theatrical actions, because unfortunately the media doesn't televise a lot of public policy debates and doesn't usually cover those types of things, so you have to try something a little more creative and a little more visual to get your message out in addition to all the other work that you're doing as part of campaign."

THE RANGE OF ACTIONS suggested is broad enough in both scope and creativity—everything from radical cheerleading, fishing in the sewers and gas-mask car shopping—that Hudema thinks every reader will find something they can apply to their own campaigns. "There's everything in there from lobbying and letter-writing campaigns to eating your ballot and occupations, so it really runs the full gamut of what types of things you can do," Hudema says. "Some of my more favourite ones in there are the mock awards; for instance, we're about to present an Environmental Polluter of the Year award to Edmonton-based Luscar Industries and the federal Liberal party for its support of the continued development of the Cheviot Mine [outside Jasper National Park]."

"Another I like is bringing your own security, which was developed when Jean Chrétien came to town and there were talks on the table about the G8, the police buildup there and the ballistic missile defence system was in the background there as well," he continues. "So we dressed up like security officials with fake earpieces and walkie-talkies and everything, and posed as security for about 30 minutes before we were discovered, at which point we escalated the action pretty quickly. We started frisk-

AN ACTION A DAY



keeps global capitalism away



ing people and asking them to declare their weapons of mass destruction at the door and told them that the other terrorists were inside so please proceed down the hallway."

ULTIMATELY, Hudema hopes that people will walk away from the book with their batteries recharged and their inspiration renewed. "I think that whether you're a seasoned activist or you're new to activism, you have an idea of the world you want and the society that you want," he says. "And I think this book gives you some tools for your toolbox and helps you start pushing in the right directions. It's very easy as an activist to get burnt out because you don't see a lot of change, because the change we're fighting for is often long-term, there's no immediate benefit to doing it, so we need to take care of ourselves. And I think that creative actions like the book suggests can not only add to the effectiveness of your message, but can also help you survive and keep pushing for your goals." ●

The launch of *An Action a Day* will take place at Gazebo Park (83 Ave and 104 St) on Saturday, May 15 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The event will consist of an hour-long workshop on theatrical actions followed by a few cups of fair-trade hot chocolate. People are encouraged to contact Earth's General Store at 439-8725 for more information or to register for the workshop.

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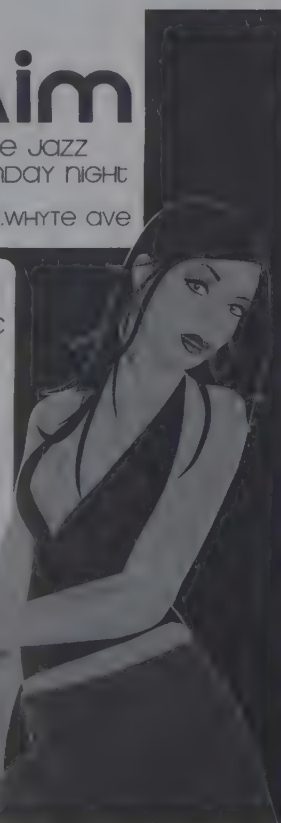
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PROVINCE

The great dictator

Man, I tell ya: there's nothing like a good old poorly-thought-out comment from Alberta's premier to get the old press release machine a-hummin'. As if Ralph Klein's widely-publicized freakout on Liberal house leader Laurie Blakeman a couple weeks ago weren't enough, the Premier brought further unwelcome attention upon himself last Friday with his surprising comments regarding the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile.

His statement has been widely published since then, but in case you jumped into the fray a little too late, Klein's comments came in response to Liberal leader Kevin Taft's suggestion that a public auto insurance plan would result in lower premiums than the current private system. The premier maintained that the Tory government would not introduce "socialized insurance like they have in Saskatchewan, the kind of insurance the Liberals so adore.

"It sounds like [former president Salvador] Allende in Chile, you know, when he took over all the copper mines and said, 'The Americans are out, the government now owns all the copper mines, all the minerals, all the resources, all the mining,'" Klein continued. "Pinochet came in, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not saying that Pinochet was any better, but because of the only elected communist in Chile, Allende, and the socialist reforms he put in, Pinochet was forced, I would say, to mount a coup." Klein, apparently in an attempt to lend some gravity to his remarks, went on to note that he once wrote a paper on Chilean history.

Klein's statement raised the ire of Chilean Canadians in cities across the country, with Edmonton standing as no exception. Alberta Federation of Labour president Kerry Barrett issued a press release calling on Klein to apologize to the Chilean community, and the Parkland Institute also wasted no time registering its disgust, as executive director Ricardo Acuna issued a release demanding that Klein reaffirm his support for democracy. "The Premier's statements were an affront to the pain, suffering and loss of thousands of Chileans, and he clearly owes them an apology, wrote Acuna. "In addition, however, the Premier must also provide a clear explanation to all Albertans about his views on the value of democracy, and on what grounds, in his mind, it is justifiably bypassed."

This Monday, Klein responded to the criticism by issuing a formal apology on the floor of the assembly. (A full transcript is available on the Government of Alberta website.) "My comments last week were not meant in any way to suggest personal support or admiration for the Pinochet regime," he explained. "My only purpose for making those remarks was to point out that socialism can often lead to unintended and negative repercussions to

society, and unfortunately that's what happened in Chile. It did. The remarks were made in the context of a discussion about the merits of socialism.

"However," he continued, "let me be clear. I had no intention of appearing to argue that the Pinochet government was in any way preferable to its predecessor. As a matter of fact, it was a brutal government."

Klein also clarified that the paper he referred to was one he recently wrote for a university course. Entitled "Allende, Pinochet and the Chilean Media," Klein noted that the essay received a 77 per cent—"not great but not bad," he assessed.

Despite the uproar, chances are this will turn out to be just another political blunder that Klein will find a way to sidestep—after all, the guy's political career survived his getting drunk and throwing money at hobos at a homeless shelter. And I really can't think of anything he could do that would be worse than that. —CHRIS BOUTET

CIVIL RIGHTS

Who needs a warrant?
You're watching *The Sopranos!*

So there you are, sitting in your living room watching HBO, when suddenly an officer of the law busts down your door without a warrant. Is he looking for drugs? Weapons? Videotaped messages from Osama bin Laden? No, but you're close, kind of. He's there to check whether or not you're stealing American satellite signals with an illegal "grey market" receiver. Although this scenario is currently only hypothetical, it could become a lot closer to reality if some recently proposed amendments to the Radiocommunication Act are accepted by the House of Commons.

Last week, Heather Black, Canada's assistant privacy commissioner, appeared in front of a House standing committee to express concerns over proposed amendments to the Act that

would allow officers and inspectors to abuse their search-and-seizure powers. The proposals would allow officers to enter a home without a warrant "where there are exigent circumstances which make it impractical for the inspector to acquire a warrant."

"We appreciate that circumstances may arise when an inspector, for public safety or related reasons, might need to use this authority to inspect radio equipment in a dwelling that is causing interference or otherwise disrupting radio communications," said Black. "However, we hope and expect that this power would not be used to enter a dwelling place for the purpose of identifying individuals who are receiving unauthorized satellite signals."

Black was even more worried that inspectors' duties are not set out in the amendments. If an inspector enters a home without a warrant, they can do anything "necessary for the purpose of performing any duty of an inspector." That's too vague, charged Black. "Setting out the duties of the inspectors might prove useful in terms of clarifying the authority of inspectors," she said.

Canadian satellite and cable providers claim they lose hundreds of millions of dollars per year to individuals who steal broadcast signals or use American systems like DirecTV, which are illegal for Canadian households to own, but very difficult for enforcement officers to trace. Canadians will often subscribe to illegal American services to gain access to popular American networks such as HBO, Showtime, ESPN and MTV, which the CRTC refuses to license for broadcast in Canada as they would promote direct competition to Canadian specialty networks.

Cable and satellite providers across the country continue to petition the CRTC for the right to carry the coveted American specialty networks. If they were allowed to transmit these coveted signals to Canadians who wanted them, the need for illegal dishes would disappear. Canadian consumers would get more choice, and there would be no need to

make legislation threatening enough to get the attention of the Privacy Commissioner's office. —STEVEN SANDOR

ENVIRONMENT

GMO foes win temporary
victory over Monsanto

Monsanto is calling it a simple business decision, but it's being heralded across Canada and the U.S. as a victory for GMO activists everywhere, as the biotech corporation announced on Monday that they are suspending plans to introduce what would have been the world's first genetically engineered wheat.

Monsanto would not go into the motive behind the suspension, simply saying that they came to the decision after "extensive consultation" with buyers in the wheat industry. "It was a lot of things coming together at once," company spokesman Chris Homer told Reuters, adding that declining wheat acreage and opposition from buyers and growers were major factors.

Indeed, opposition to GMOs has been quite prevalent these days, fueled by concerns that the modified food products could cause health complications, increase weed resistance and provide Monsanto with a monopolistic stranglehold on world crops. This week, opponents applauded Monsanto's decision. "Monsanto has correctly read the winds of public opinion and farmers and consumers," said Ronnie Cummins, national director of the U.S. Organic Consumers Association. "The crops that are in the pipeline are not going to be able to be introduced without a tremendous amount of debate and civil strife."

But while the battle may have been won, the war is far from over for GMO opponents: Monsanto spokesperson Trish Jordan was careful to note to the CBC that the company hasn't cancelled its application to sell modified wheat seed and has not ruled out selling it in the future. —CHRIS BOUTET



By DAN RUBINSTEIN

Out, out, damned spots!

There's a lot of hockey left to be played. Unfortunately, that also means there's a lot of beer commercials left to be watched.

Now, there's nothing new about television marketers using sex—and repetition—to sell. But following the dramatic exploits of those upstart Calgary Flames and my under-achieving, heartbreaking Toronto Maple Leafs on CBC's *Hockey Night in Canada* these past few weeks have meant constant bombardment from beer ads. And not a wide cross-section of erudite lager and ale commercials that showcase the subtle nuances of the genre.

Basically, it's been three ads in a loop since the NHL regular season ended last month. One adheres to the tried and true "big boys" formula; as a nod to its clever, work-evading protagonist, let's call it "Johnson!" The second, part of an ingenious series of notices about a Canadian beer set in the mountains, takes the "multiple babe" approach; let's call it "Sasquatch" for easy reference. The third doesn't feature a single human body—not even an attractive woman! In this ad, a bottle cap is dropped into a glass of beer and the resulting splash magically resembles a crown; let's call it... oh, I dunno, "Budweiser: The King of Beers."

Neither "Johnson!" nor "Sasquatch" hits you over the head with a "drink our brand of beer" message. Instead, they merely seek to entertain and relax the viewer sitting on the edge of his couch, nails chewed down thanks to yet another overtime. Though its style is much more classical, "Budweiser: The King of Beers" has the same overriding goal. Problem is, with about half a dozen commercial breaks per period of hockey, and me watching about four or five playoff games a week, that's simply too much entertainment and relaxation to handle. So much repetition diminishes the impact these ads should be having on the psyches of consumers from coast to coast.

The solution? Variety.

It sounds crazy, but why not mix in some other male-oriented commercials if that's the target demographic? A few car commercials? Perhaps the odd Viagra ad? As Keith Gertz, CEO of the Bud Light Institute—which is "dedicated to providing solutions for men who strive to spend more time hanging out with friends and maybe having a beer"—says, innovation is crucial in these matters.

So break up the monotony. Or at least give us new beer commercials. We will drink from the cup—it's part of our culture—but we need advertising executives to meet us halfway. ●

Coaled methane

Continued from page 4

of well placement for CBM is much higher than conventional wells, averaging one every 200 metres, leaving farmers with a bumper crop of the noisy contraptions dotting their land.

CURRENTLY, CBM exploration and development in Alberta is governed by existing rules governing conventional oil and gas, but Don Bester, a retired rancher from the Rocky Mountain House area, says new regulations must be put in place to prevent the kind of disaster CBM has caused down south. "The existing regulations are not fitting," he says. "It's like trying to play a game of cricket with baseball rules."

Bester is the director of the Butte Action Committee, a group dedicated to investigating the use and conservation of water by the oil industry in Alberta; their powerful lobbying was instrumental in getting Alberta to

adopt its Water for Life strategy. He had been watching the impact CBM exploration had on the Powder River basin in Wyoming and the San Juan basin in New Mexico, and he knew it would only be a matter of time before similar projects got going up here. By keeping his ear to the ground, he became aware of a number of CBM projects within the province before they were made public.

"When this thing first evolved," he says, "there was a lot of under-the-table secrecy between both the Alberta Energy Board and the Department of Energy. It was denied they were even in existence. They did not want the stigma of coaled methane, of what happened in the States. They wanted to get it developed and the plans all laid out before the public even knew what was going on. The Butte Action Committee was the one who brought this into the public realm."

By teaming up with several other like-minded organizations throughout the province, the committee was

able to raise enough money to fly in members of the Powder River Basin Resource Council and the Oil and Gas Accountability Organization, two environmental groups fighting CBM in America. They presented horror stories of what the process had done to the land to a crowd of concerned landowners and government representatives involved in energy and the environment. "They didn't realize the impact it had caused down in the States," Bester says. "They had no idea."

THEIR EFFORTS SUCCEEDED not only in awakening the public to the possible ramifications of CBM, but they also sent the government scrambling to check things out for themselves. Realizing they were sitting on a potential powderkeg, the Alberta Department of Energy created a stakeholders' committee to look at the impact CBM might have on the air, water and surface rights of landowners and to make recommendations for changes to current regu-

lations. Bester is a member of this committee, and their report will be delivered to the government this November. He hopes by working with the government, things will improve before it's too late.

"Is [CBM] going to create a whole bunch of more problems?" Bester asks. "Yes. Are they solvable? Maybe. If the government listens to the recommendations from its own advisory committee, I think they will be." However, this April they asked for a moratorium on all CBM development involving the use of freshwater until the stakeholders could deliver their recommendations. They were denied. While the majority of CBM sites in the province are considered dry wells, where little water is disturbed, there are currently four applications for freshwater diversion licenses being reviewed by the Department of the Environment in relation to CBM.

DARIN BARTER, a spokesperson for the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board who has been working on CBM for a year now, says the government has already learned from the mistakes made in the early days of CBM. Currently, all landowners near CBM drilling sites must be informed of the development, saline water must be reinjected into deep storage wells and any freshwater pumped out of aquifers must be approved by the province. "We're not going to let what happened in the States happen here," Barter says. "It's just not going to happen. Right now we have a very strong regulatory structure in this province and with additional or

enhanced regulations dealing directly with CBM we're very confident that this is a resource that can be developed responsibly."

Still, the Klein government has a history of resisting recommendations limiting the oil and gas industry, the main engine driving the provincial economy. With estimates of Alberta's CBM reserves at 500 trillion cubic feet, even if only 10 per cent of it turns out to be accessible, there's a lot at stake. "That's a lot of royalties, and I think that's the only thing that drives Ralph Klein," Bester says. "I've voted PC for 45 years and I will never again. Put it that way."

BY PUTTING the quick dollars of the oil and gas industry ahead of the needs of the agricultural community—which has already weathered the storm of conventional gas exploration, not to mention the hardships brought on by drought and mad cow disease—Klein is alienating himself from traditionally conservative farmers.

"Agriculture was here way before the oil and gas industry ever thought about coming into Alberta, and we'll be here a long time after," says Bester. "We're asked to be stewards of the land, but if they won't accept recommendations from the people who are looking after the land, then where are we heading? Where are we going to be when all the oil and gas companies are walking back into the U.S. and leave us with one hell of a mess to clean up? We're going to be looking at billions of dollars to clean up their mess." ●



Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)
Naked volleyball
Sure is fun for you, but not
For the rest of us

TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)
Refreshing showers
Are a great way to start off
A new jail sentence

GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)
Your plan to get laid
By playing bass guitar has
Fundamental flaws

CANCER

(June 21-July 22)
Now is your time to
Shine after being exposed
To radiation

LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)
It's all in the hips
Take your hula hoop secrets
With you to the grave

VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)
Your fate has been sealed
Though you struggle, you will be
Sold a new toothbrush

LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)
Your penchant for poor
Penguins will place you in quite
The predicament

SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)
Mind your Ps, but don't
Worry about the Qs, since
Nobody likes them

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)
Big Brother might watch
You if you hired new writers
To add some plot twists

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)
You will find fame through
This summer's Faces of Death
Compilation tape

AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)
Ask yourself if you
Feel lucky. Now ask yourself
If you want beef, Punk.

PISCES

(Feb 19-Mar 20)
You have disobeyed
Willy Wonka's simple rules
And now you must die

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- Rack-and-pinion steering

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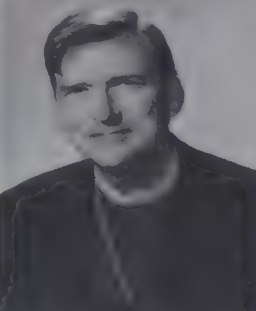
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Welcome to the Club

Sierra Club's star-packed
People and Planet
Conference is for
laypeople too

By KRISTINE OWRAM

Sierra Club of Canada executive director Elizabeth May vividly recalls the incident that aroused her interest in environmentalism, a cause which she says has since become her entire life.

"I grew up in Connecticut," she explains, "and at an early age some of our sheep died for no apparent reason. It was very distressing. We took the animals to the vet, and they couldn't figure out what happened. Some time later, I read [Rachel Carson's] *Silent Spring*, and I recognized the symptoms."

May's sheep had died with their legs twitching and their eyes rolling back in their heads, a result of over-exposure to pesticides. When she realized this, at the age of 12, she wrote her town and asked if they had been spraying anything along the roadsides during the time in which her family's sheep had died. "They had, in fact, sprayed organic phosphate insecticides and chlorinated hydrocarbons," May says. "So the connection between our animals and pesticides at an early age certainly made me very concerned about what we were doing to the environment."

May's personal concern for the environment eventually became her job. The Sierra Club of Canada is a

with the goal of assessing the state of the world's natural and human environments. Response was so positive that the club has announced that it will be putting on the second of what is to become a biennial conference series; the conference, entitled *Changing Values for a Sustainable Future*, will be held this weekend in Calgary at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT).

WITH AN IMPRESSIVE LIST of speakers that includes chairperson of the Council of Canadians Maude Barlow, author and journalist Naomi Klein, broadcaster Ken Wiwa, director of the International Forum on Globalization Jerry Mander, Saskatchewan canola farmer and

NEWS

genetically modified organism, opponent Percy Schmeiser and children's songwriter and environmentalist Raffi, May is excited about the unique perspectives the conference has to offer.

"There are a lot of environmental conferences across the country a lot of the time, but there are very few that present an opportunity for the concerned citizen who is not an

expert to come and get broad exposure to the issues," she explains, adding that People and Planet offers far more than just "sitting and listening." Also planned are workshops, a satirical presentation on water issues by Newfoundland activist comedian Greg Malone, as well as dance, music and art.

"Underlying the whole thing, we have a very distinct approach in that we're focusing on questions of values and spirituality," May says. "The

national organization with offices from Victoria to Corner Brook, Newfoundland, dedicated to the preservation of the environment. Two years ago, the club held its first **People and Planet Conference** two years ago in Kingston, Ontario,

conference is not just about lots of information; it's an attempt to nourish mind and soul and heart. Our goal is that when people leave they're not only better informed, but energized, positive and better activists with the commitment and



Naomi Klein

the renewal that comes from being with people who are concerned about the same things you're concerned about."

MAY'S IMPRESSIVE RÉSUMÉ of ecological involvement means she will also be speaking at the conference, delivering a keynote address on climate change. After moving to Cape Breton in 1972, she almost immediately became the leader of Cape Breton Landowners Against the Spray, a group fighting the use of insecticides by the forestry sector in Nova Scotia.

After graduating from the Dalhousie University Law School in 1983, she became a member of the bar in both Nova Scotia and Ontario as an environmental lawyer, and in 1986 she was appointed senior policy advisor to then-federal environmental minister Tom McMillan. After resigning over the Mulroney government's illegal approval of the Rafferty-Alameda dams in Saskatchewan without prior environmental assessment, she began work at the Sierra Club in 1989.

Before she was employed by the Sierra Club, most of May's environmental work was on a volunteer basis, and to her, little has changed. "I've always regarded myself at the Sierra Club as a sort of subsidized volunteer, but the salary has improved since then," she laughs.

May sums up her work, the aims of the Sierra Club and the goal of the People and the Planet conference in one word: "survival." "Some people think that people concerned about the environment are less concerned about people," she says, "but my motivation has largely been around issues of human health and having the planet survive as a livable place for all species. We've had a lot of victories in the 30-some years I've been doing this kind of work, so I tend to stay pretty optimistic about the potential for change once people become aware and active." ●

For more information on the People and the Planet conference, which takes place from May 14-16 in Calgary, go to www.sierraclub.ca/Edmontonians who are interested in attending the conference but lack a ride can check out the University of Alberta Students' Union's Rideboard at

www.su.ualberta.ca/su/businesses_and_services/info/serv/rideboard for carpooling opportunities.

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Northgate Mall
Southgate Mall
West Edmonton Mall
Westmount Mall

Downtown

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Altn Computers
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three
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bill

By RICHARD BURNETT

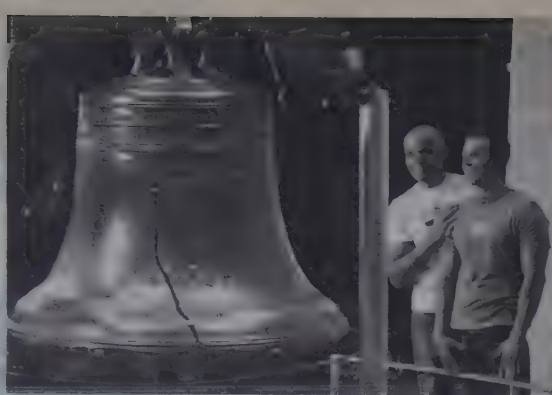
Philadelphia freedom

I went to Philadelphia last month to track down R&B diva Patti LaBelle. Except when I got there I got sidetracked. Patti was nowhere to be found in her hometown, but I bumped into just about everybody else at the 11th annual Equality Forum, an international (but mainly American) conference to foster gay liberation worldwide. This year's featured nation was Canada, and there were Canucks all over the damn place.

My first night there I got hosed at "Gayborhood" watering hole Woody's (whose bar staff pours a mean three-ounce tequila "shot") with Torontonians Joe Vargnell and Kevin Bourassa, the first gay couple to get married in North America. I invited Canada's number-one drag queen, Sheena Hershey, to dinner (she and DJ Mark Anthony lost this year's Juno Award for Best Song to some other fabulous bitch whose name I can't remember) and I bumped into Carole Pope.

I blabbed with EGALE executive director Gilles Marchildon and challenged high-profile gay-rights attorney Douglas Elliott (lawyer for high-school prom queen Mark Hall) over Canada's just-passed Bill C-250, which added sexual orientation to Canada's hate-crimes law. (I'm against hate-crimes legislation in general because murder is murder and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms already protects everybody.)

The only Canadian who wasn't in Philly was NDP MP Svend Robinson, who must have known he was sabotaging his career and reputation when he stole that \$50,000 ring at a Vancouver auction last month. Robinson then declined to appear at the Equality Forum where he was scheduled to speak on several panels. "We didn't replace



Svend," EF executive director Malcolm Lazin told me. "He's irreplaceable."

Not anymore, he ain't.

I went out quite a bit in Philly, a warm city of six million where gay icon Langston Hughes graduated from America's first black university, Lincoln University, and where fellow gay icon Walt Whitman lived just outside city limits, across the Delaware River in Camden, New Jersey. (4,000 people visit Whitman's stark home each year. While there I found myself curiously moved when I walked into Whitman's bedroom and saw the actual bed he died in back in 1892.)

One night I got cruised by some hot boys at—wait for it—a lesbian circuit party. A couple were dressed as sailors. I was staying (courtesy of Philly tourism) at the gorgeous four-star Sheraton Rittenhouse Square Hotel, America's first environmentally friendly hotel, smack in the middle of Philly's chi-chi downtown district. My room was enormous, though I admit far fewer "soldiers" landed on my bed than at Normandy.

Another night I took the subway to Citizens Bank Ballpark, the gorgeous, brand-new, fan-friendly outdoor home of the Philadelphia Phillies. The sold-out crowd of 44,000 made far less noise than 5,000 at the Big O, so they all heard me root for the visiting Arizona Diamondbacks. "Strike out the bum!" I'd scream every time Montreal Expos-killing Phillies right fielder Bobby Abreu would come up to the plate. I'm sur-

prised I wasn't escorted out of the ballpark. Clearly they don't call Philly the city of brotherly and sisterly love for nothing. (The Phillies, by the by, host the Colorado Rockies at their August 9 Gay and Lesbian Community Day.)

I suspect some Canadians at the Equality Forum had their fill, though, when the Philadelphia Flyers beat the Toronto Maple Leafs the next afternoon. Me, I smiled when Philly thoroughbred Smarty Jones won the Kentucky Derby and newly-acquired NFL Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Terrell Owens wore black tights to his team's first workout. "I'm not used to wearing tights with shorts on top of them," Owens told reporters afterward. "I felt like [Eagles coach Andy Reid] was going to let me through practice throughout the season just with my tights. A couple of coaches came up to me and told me I need to put my shorts on. Things are different around here."

Philadelphians were also obsessed with local rapper Beanie Sigel, who'd just been acquitted of attempted murder while his Roc-A-Fella business partner Jay-Z (and Jay-Z's girlfriend Beyoncé) stood by Beanie in court like family. Meanwhile, across town, Rev. Jesse Jackson got his hair trimmed at Woodward's Barbershop. "We sell the most guns," Jackson said. "We're the most violent country on earth and it doesn't have to be that way."

But I never felt in danger anywhere in Philly, not even when I took the subway to the south side to see the Phillies. Rather, I found Philadelphia to be a civilized place, from the 2,000 city-sponsored murals decorating the sides of their buildings, to Philly's famed 19th-century Georgian architecture. And as a person of mixed race, I found it thrilling to see white, black and Latino gays enjoying each other's company side by side in the "Gayborhood." This is, after all, the city where the Constitution of the United States was written in 1787 by, among others, Philadelphia's favourite son Ben Franklin. When I visited Philadelphia's magnificent National Constitution Center I saw busloads of school children arrive for a truly engaging multimedia history lesson.

"Taxation without representation is tyranny!" Americans cried on the eve of the American Revolution in 1776, defeating the world's then-greatest power, Britain. Two centuries later, Philadelphia remains a reminder that "we the people" means everybody, gay Americans included. Taxation without representation is tyranny, indeed.

Like Patti LaBelle sings with her gospel choir, "If you've been blessed, pass it on." ●

Pearls before signs

Are Alberta's roads signs so ugly that we need to spend \$4.5 million to beautify them?

By CHRIS BOUTET

There is a crisis in Alberta today. It's not one you hear about very often, thanks to a media that is all too obsessed with hot-button issues *du jour* like the privatization of auto insurance or the declining quality of healthcare, education and countless other social programs. Indeed, this issue has flown almost completely under the radar, but our intrepid Alberta government has nevertheless identified the problem and quietly allocated the funds necessary to put an end to it, all without

even so much as a pounded podium from the official opposition. The crisis that I speak of, of course, is the alleged crappiness of our province's highway signs, which the Alberta government is just about to pump \$4.5 million into fixing.

Although I like to consider myself a fairly observant person, I must admit that throughout my travels in Alberta, I've often found myself mildly indifferent—if not totally unaware—of the markers that indicate which roadway I'm currently on. In fact, I was surprised to learn that our current signage is brown. Nonetheless, it is this very brownicity that, apparently, people are finding ugly. And not even ugly in that tolerable, God-why-would-I-care-what-colour-our-highway-signs-are kind of way; the ugliness of these signs has proven so intolerably offensive to everyone unfortunate enough to be caught in their stomach-churning, Elephant-Man-esque gaze that the Tories had no choice but to take action, lest they risk a province-wide wave of anti-sign vigilante justice.

Okay, maybe it's not *that* bad. But the message transportation minister Ed Stelmach sent when he announced the expenditure last week in an interview with CBC was clear: the signs have got to go. According to Stelmach, the province has decided to replace the old brown signs with hot, sexy new blue-and-white ones due to "many" complaints from Albertans who feel that "our signs are outdated, they're old, [and] they certainly don't present Alberta in the best vein."

"Secondly," he continued, "from a tourism point of view, we should be meeting the same standards that everybody has in North America." The new signs are scheduled to be erected just in time for the province's centennial next year.

THE MINISTER'S COMMENTS. Of course, raise more than a few puzzling questions. First, who exactly is complaining about our roads signs? Is there some sort of call-in number

printed under the highway number that concerned motorists can use to register their discontent with our lack of roadside aesthetics? And on top of that, surely we have to take into account that the kind of person who would get so upset about a road sign that they would actively seek out those responsible and voice their disdain can hardly represent the general population of Alberta—at least not to the extent that an expenditure of this size could be justified.

Secondly, at what point does a painted, galvanized steel sign get "outdated"? Brown's a pretty tasteful colour, really. Oh sure, all the "cool" provinces might be prancing daintily about, sporting fancy roads signs in all of the season's hot new colours, but as my mother used to tell me as she forced me to wear turtlebacks and bellbottoms during my early years of elementary school, people should have enough confidence in them-

selves to look beyond fashion fads and just be comfortable with what they like to wear. (By the way, Mom, I hated wearing those turtlebacks. They were itchy.) As well, I simply can't imagine how our roads signs fail to live up to the North American standard. Are they on the side of the road? Check. Do they tell you what road you're on? Check. Do they use the Arabic numerical system to convey to drivers their road-on-being status? Supercheck. Seems pretty standard to me.

BUT THESE ARE ALL relatively minor points; of all Stelmach's justifications, the one that seems the most misguided is his assessment that the signs don't "present Alberta in the best vein." While Stelmach may feel that our highway signs paint our province in a poor light, I can think of one other thing that is likely far more detrimental to the public's opinion of Alberta: the fact our government would even think to waste this kind of money on a needless beautification project during a time of unprecedented stress on provincial social programs.

I know that, at least on a provincial level, this is not a gigantic sum of money, but surely there are better ways to throw around \$4.5 million. Auto insurance and post-secondary tuition levels are through the roof. The bastion of public healthcare is threatening to crumble right before our eyes, and homelessness rates in Edmonton continue to stretch the meagre resources of shelters and food banks. I don't doubt that the Alberta centennial is an important issue worthy of such expense to some, but I can't imagine how the government can, with a straight face, allocate money to what is essentially an unnecessary endeavour and then turn around and tell taxpayers that there isn't enough in the coffers to increase subsidies to social programs.

To me, this kind of frivolous spending is even uglier than our roads signs are purported to be. And, buddy, apparently that's pretty ugly. ●

OPINION

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infinite lives

By DARREN ZENKO

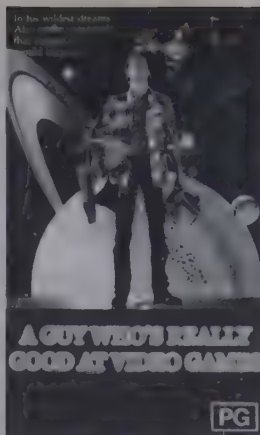
Robo chops

So, this is the week of the annual advent of the E3 trade show—the Electronic Entertainment Expo, the Sacred City of all that bleeps, blorps, flashes and causes Our Precious Children to go on gun-crazy rampages—and boy, do I know it. Geekboys all over God's green Earth-wide Web are flashing packets of digital drool at light-speed, and breathless press releases have, through sheer numbers, reclaimed my e-mail inbox from the forces of spam. Everything is REVOLUTIONARY and EXCITING and MOST ANTICIPATED, and every one of the big game companies is kicking (or is set to kick) all the others' ass in a weird sort of ass-kicking circle-jerk.

It's so exciting it's boring. What's a game columnist with 1,400 meagre words a month—and no \$\$\$ to fly to L.A.—to do with it all? Answer: ignore it and talk about it later, when there's something to talk about. If DarkDragyn Interactive or Psymancer Studios, PLC, wants to you to read their press releases, they can hire a squad of pre-teen flyer-carriers to dump them in the ravine and you can pick them up there;

why should I handle their rewrite desk? I'm sure that when I get the skinny on, say, the new Nintendo DS portable I'll freak out and wave my hands in the air like I just don't care, but for now I'll content myself with getting high and playing *Custom Robo* (GameCube).

Now, it's not like *Custom Robo* is all that great a game, especially for one player, but as a chaotic, twitch-paced robot battle game it's a hell of a steam-blower—which is exactly what I need, because I'm also playing *Siren* (PS2), and after a couple hours of slow and deliberate (and damn spooky) Japanese stealth-horror my nerves are shot to shit. *Robo's* single-player mode is billed as an RPG, but it's really just a long and somewhat tedious tutorial that you're forced to play through in order to unlock the various interchangeable robot parts that put the "custom" in the title. The Collectors Fever that drives a game like (most famously) *Pokémon* kicks in hard here, and with nearly 40 robo chassis, 50 guns, 30 bomb types, 30 "pods" of various utility and 15 leg models,



that's... well, that's a lot of permutations to be mixed 'n' matched.

The real fun in *Custom Robo* comes when you gear up and slug it out with

a few pals—which is almost always the case with any title; I only wish I had more game-inclined friends instead of little princesses who pick up a controller for about five minutes before saying "Let's go to the Dog" when they realize they're playing something other than *Grand Theft Auto*. Anyway, maybe it was the grass, but after a couple hours of multiplayer *Custom Robo* (not all my friends are princesses, not all the time), I found myself thinking of it as a sort of meta-game, something simple enough that it reflects all multiplayer combat games. Button-mashing newcomers can (and often do) win, especially when their finesse opponents are being too finicky... or when they're simply good on the stick.

Stick skill—stick instinct—is to videogaming what "athleticism" is to physical sports. It's what lets an experienced gamer start winning right away in an unfamiliar game, even if they're not entirely sure how things work and what button does what. There are certain things that you should or should not do in any game. I'm not really talk-

ing about "strategy" here—a good player knows those things on a physical level, on a stick level; the moves come from the hands, not the brain. *Custom Robo* plays like a driver's-license test for these skills. For example, *Bob the Angry Flower* creator Steve Notley absolutely kicked my ass right off the bat, using tricks I immediately recognized as standard first-person-shooter maneuvers, and I know he didn't have to think about them. I was used to playing against the dog-stupid computer, and he cut me to pieces.

Of course, I wised up right away and proceeded to hand him his ass, but the whole thing got me thinking about the fact that tens of millions of people like us, all over the world, have these skills, these instinctive abilities that we've spent thousands of hours honing and perfecting. Again, maybe it's just the grass, but... any of you ever see *The Last Starfighter*? ☺

"After this writing, I did get the skinny, and I did wave my hands in the air. This and more in two weeks, Vuesketeers."



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Katimavik: interesting!

Stephanie Hample doesn't feel 'Vik-timized at all by Canadian youth program

By CHRIS BOUTET

As the grim spectres of working for a living at some crappy job or taking out a loan and going into post-secondary education loom ominously in the foreground, those first few months after high school can be pretty daunting. For many teens, the choices may hardly feel like choices at all—but lately, people like Edmontonian Stephanie Hample and thousands of other high school grads across Canada have been discovering that there is a third option: it's

called Katimavik, and it's a choice that Hample is glad she made.

Hample, 20, first heard about Katimavik through a book by humourist Will Ferguson entitled *I Was a Teenage Katima-Victim!*; in it, Ferguson describes how his experience with the group completely changed his life and the way he thought about his country. "Prior to Katimavik," he writes, "Canada was little more than an abstract concept to me.... When you grow up in the North, as I did, Canada hardly exists at all. Canada is where all the radio signals fall from, somewhere out there. Katimavik made it real." Ferguson's kind words piqued Hample's interest, and, armed with the desire to learn a bit more about the country where she had been born and raised but of which she had seen so little, she checked out the website and signed herself up.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do after high school. I was just bumming around a bit, doing some work, nothing big," says Hample over the phone from High River, Alberta. "I first read about the group in Will Ferguson's book, and that got me kind of thinking about it. And then one of my friends joined right after high school, and my parents, back in the early '80s, had billeted Katimavik people. So I said, 'Why not?' and decided to join."

It was a choice that Hample has never regretted. "It's been totally amazing; it teaches you so much about life and about yourself," she says. "I've come out a totally different person."

AT THIS POINT, Katimavik no doubt sounds like some sort of creepy cult, a shadowy, possibly religious organization that lures teens into its fold under the auspices of furthering Canadian pride, only to spit them out a gushing, converted, pro-Katimavik-ian. But have faith: there's nothing sinister going on here, just a genuine desire to teach the youth of Canada something about their country.

Katimavik (which means "meeting place" in the Inuktitut language) is a national youth learning service, founded in 1977 by Senator Jacques Hébert. Its mission is to foster to personal development of Canada's young people through a program of volunteer community work, training and group interaction. Open to Canadians aged 17 to 21, the program puts Anglophones and francophones into groups of 11 and then sends them off on a nine-month journey across the country during which they stay in three small towns for three months and get put to work in the various community services.

During its first nine years of life, Katimavik sent more than 15,000 kids across the country, but the

group fell on hard times in 1986 when its entire budget was withdrawn by the Canadian government. Despite Hébert's protestations, which included a 21-day hunger strike, the decision was maintained. Katimavik managed to stay afloat in a very limited capacity as an outdoor recreation and training centre until 1994, when Youth Service Canada came forward and brought the pro-

ject back to life, organizing six new projects involving 66 youth from Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. The following year, interest in the program tripled, and since 1999, newfound support from the federal government through Exchanges Canada has allowed Katimavik to offer their unique opportunity to 800 young Canadians a year.

FEATURE

Hample found herself in three little burgs you've likely never heard of: Thornbury, Cocagne and High River—in Ontario, New Brunswick and Alberta, respectively. According to Hample, the placements aren't random; there is some reason behind the assignments. "Usually we have an English, a French and a bilingual stay on our tour, which definitely helps you get some exposure to some culture that you otherwise wouldn't get," she explains. "Typically it's a small town, and we come in and volunteer for a nonprofit organization—schools, volunteer fire departments, museums, senior citizens' homes, that sort of thing. We're basically just extra hands for whatever type of work that needs to be done."


According to Hample, Katimavik provides food, accommodation, travel and toiletries, as well as a princely wage of three whole dollars a day. And while things have certainly been tough at times, the good

has far outweighed the bad. "Sometimes it's hard, sure. Not everyone's going to get along, there's going to be conflicts in the group, and you're away from home for nine months so you're going to get homesick. And even if you're totally sick of each other, it's really hard to get away from the group because in most of these small towns there's, like, a bar, a gas station and two restaurants, and that's it," she says, adding that the stress can prove to be too much for some. "There's normally 11 people to a group, but people can get kicked out or leave on their own accord. Of the 11 that started out, there's only eight of us now at the end."

Hample, however, has lasted the full nine months, and when she finishes her tour of duty in High River this Friday, where she is working as a teacher's aide at a local elementary school, she will return home to Edmonton. Once back, Hample still sounds a little unsure as to what her future plans will entail; maybe she'll get a job, she says; maybe she'll do a little more volunteer work. Some of the kids in her group are planning a trip to Fiji in 2006, something that Hample hopes she will be a part of. Still, she continues, even if she's returning to some of the same uncertainty she left behind nine months ago, Hample can't help but feel that through Katimavik, she's still managed to move forward in her life.

"It's been amazing," she says. "It's taught me a lot about people and life, I've been able to see so much more of the country than I otherwise would have, to see the differences between say, Alberta and New Brunswick, small towns and the big city. Katimavik will change your whole life. It shows you so many different viewpoints and how to cope with life; it's just such an incredible experience."

"And," she adds, "it's free." ●



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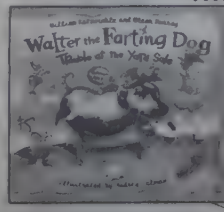
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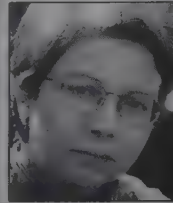
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A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories like day dishes (cuLoIna is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeines, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hot-pot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the

larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at cuLoIna means a mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange ginger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large, browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 04/01/04)

IL PORTICO

10012-107 St • 424-0707

Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tantalizing arugula and the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, corn-fed, free-range

chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dressing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, including prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are showstoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish. **Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/26/04)

LOS ANDES RESTAURANT

3903-99 St • 435-6202

It's hard to imagine that a tiny joint tucked away in a southside industrial neighbourhood off 99 Street would have the abundance of charm this modest establishment does. Flags of Chile hang from the high ceiling and one entire wall is covered with a landscape mural depicting the very mountains that give the place its name. A carnivorous theme is evident on the menu from the lunch special (beef and rice for just \$5.95) right through to the sopa del dia (soup of the day), also beef. I give strong consideration

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Blend it like Beckham?

A chance video rental inspires me to concoct a homemade Indian dinner

By DAVID DiCENZO

I finally saw *Bend It Like Beckham* the other day. My reactions were twofold: (1) our soccer team doesn't do nearly enough drills; and (2) man, could I go for some Indian food. This overwhelming craving made me realize that Indian is not exactly a style of cuisine that you grab on the fly. You can get quick Vietnamese or Japanese, but I always associate Indian with a more formal sit-down, feast-like environment. And unless you unearth a good lunch or dinner buffet, it can get pricy too.

As much as I loved the soccer component of *Bend It*—though the goal celebrations were a little over the top—what resonated with me was the main character's strict Sikh mother drilling into daughter Jess's head that she needed to worry about learning how make a traditional Indian meal rather than hooking the ball like her hero Becks. Of course, I wasn't the only one thinking food after the film had ended. I read Roger Ebert's review of the movie after the fact and pulled this line from it: "All ethnic comedies

feature scenes that make you want to leave the theatre and immediately start eating, and *Bend It Like Beckham* may inspire some of its fans to make Indian friends simply so they can be invited over for dinner."

Kinda shallow of Rog, but I get his point. Luckily, I already have a few Indian friends. I call up Raja and tell him I'm into making some Indian. He suggests I go down to 34 Street and check out the markets and stores there, of which there are many. I want to make some type of curry and also decide on *aloo gobi*, a potato and cauliflower dish.

COOKING

"Make sure you finish them with fresh coriander and lemon," Raja suggests. "That brings all the spices together."

The thing is, I want to make my own curry spice as well. So I start at JB Cash and Carry, where I pick up all sorts of wicked stuff like green cardamom seeds, cumin seeds, turmeric, cloves and peppercorns. It's cheap too. The woman behind the counter is extremely helpful; I also get my coriander and naan bread there. I then take a quick walk across the parking lot to Lahore Sweets and Restaurant to pick up some desserts—a couple pieces each of *pista kala kand* (pistachio-flavoured square), coconut *barfi*, white *kala kand* and this delicious thing

called *kaju mesu* (I ate one in the car).

After a few more stops, I'm off to the kitchen.

MY SISTER MARIA is a big Indian food aficionado, so she was kind enough to send me a spice blend recipe for my curry. Her mix goes something like this: one teaspoon of cumin seeds, one teaspoon coriander seeds, half a teaspoon of black peppercorns, two whole cloves, a quarter-teaspoon of cardamom seeds, one tablespoon of turmeric and a quarter-teaspoon of cayenne. (Caraway seeds and allspice berries are also part of the recipe, but Maria always passes on the former and says the latter is optional, so I leave both out.) Zap everything but the turmeric and cayenne in a coffee grinder and then mix in those final two ingredients by hand. The smell, once ground, is just awesome. I take a sniff and then do the same with my store-bought curry spice on my nearby rack and it's a joke.

I chuck the old stuff.

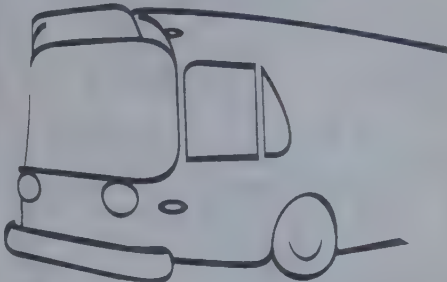
The *aloo gobi* is pretty easy to make, like Raja had told me. I cube some potatoes and boil them for a few minutes. In a deep pan, I start sautéing some onions, eventually adding some grated garlic and ginger when they begin to soften. I mix in the potatoes and cauliflower and then need to add the dry spices. The recipe I found online featured many spices

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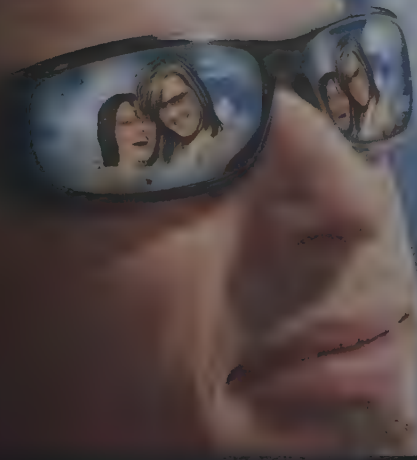


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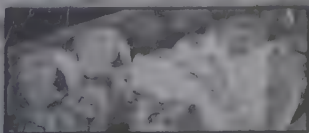
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DISH WEEKLY

to the hamburguesa de pollo (a chicken burger) but in the end, I happily decide on the lomito (\$4.50), a sandwich of thinly sliced pork with avocado. I also want the Los Andes salad and I'm pleased to find from my host that I can get some on the side for a mere two dollars. The salad comes first. It's a simple mix of Romaine, tomato slices and a vinaigrette topped with some chopped cilantro but the lettuce is crisp and the dressing is clean and bold enough to almost wake me up from my trance as I read a mag. The sandwich follows shortly thereafter and my first bite confirms the wisdom of my decision. There's a healthy amount of both white and darker pork in it but it's the avocado and fresh bread that make the meal. It's warm and rich, with the items all melding together as it passes over the palate. The bun itself is crunchy, light and unlike anything I've had around here. "Do you make the bread?" I ask

the motherly figure doing the serving. She nods. It may seem like an innocuous touch but I just love the fact that they've made a great sandwich even better by making the bread themselves. I mean, it's a helluva lot more representative of the culture than going to Safeway and picking up a few bags of kaisers, right? As I mop up every last crumb and piece of lettuce, my thoughts go to servicing my sweet tooth. Los Andes has three choices (at lunch, anyway): flan, ice cream with strawberry topping and the torta mil hojas. "How's the torta?" The lady in charge simply kisses her fingers to indicate the quality. Surprise, surprise, I'm sold. The large slice of cake (only three bucks, if you can believe it) features numerous flaky layers of pastry all held together by what initially resembles a peanut butter mixture but is actually some type of ultra-sweet caramel. It's absolutely delicious. I live by the motto that nothing is too sweet, though this comes close. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 05/06/04)

OVERTIME SOUTH

Whitemud Crossing (421-106 5t)
• 485-1717

I've been to the downtown Overtime in the past, but this version, once home to a Scruffy Murphy's, is definitely different. Sure, the numerous TVs and comfy little alcoves to relax in with friends are the same, and the Kevin Lowe paraphernalia is visible as a framed Team Canada jersey belonging to the Oil GM and part owner hangs at the bar. But other than the mini-humidor, the swank-o-meter hardly registers. No, this is a more proletarian crowd—couples, dudes in ballcaps and beer. Another thing that's different is the food. I recall a relatively in-depth, upscale bar-food menu at the downtown digs but Overtime South... Well, I'm pretty sure it's the old Scruffy's menu. There's your typical roadhouse fare of finger foods and sandwiches, with a Guinness pie and all-day Irish breakfast thrown in for good measure. I'm somewhat tempt-

SEE NEXT PAGE

Indian food

Continued from previous page

similar to the curry mix I just made so I simply use some of that. The only difference is that I add some *garam masala*, an aromatic North Indian spice blend intended to kick up the heat a bit. I cover the pan and let the flavours all blend together until the potatoes and cauliflower soften.

My curry has an Alberta twist. I've been ODING on chicken lately so I get two main items for two different curries—a halibut fillet and a piece of beef. I know, I know, the cow's sacred in India, right? Oh well. I brown the beef in a pan and then remove it. I again sauté some onions in the beef residue and eventually throw in some chopped vegetables. I had a yellow pepper and some zucchini on hand so they had to do. I grate some garlic into the pan after the veggies begin to cook down a bit and then add the curry spice (creating that vibrant yellow/orange colour from the turmeric) and a bit of chicken stock once the items in the pan are all coated. I add some canned tomatoes and let the whole thing simmer for a bit. I'm not sure how traditional this is but I take a page out of Naked Chef Jamie Oliver's book and pour in some coconut milk to thicken the curry up.

JUST LIKE JAMIE, a buddy comes over to sample my work. We crack a few beers and I spoon out some of the spicy *aloo gobi*, then scoop some of the beef curry (I saved the halibut for the next day) to pour over the fluffy jasmine rice. (I should've bought some basmati, though the jasmine was just fine.) I top it with the coriander and a lemon slice, as instructed by Raja, throw a piece of heated naan on top and we're ready to roll.

The curry is rich and I can really notice the more intense flavours created by the freshly ground spices. Again, the *aloo gobi* is hot, but I like it. I can't take credit for the dessert but it sure is a nice way to finish.

Whether or not the meal would meet the high expectations of Jess's fictional mother is up for debate. Still, it's not bad stuff for an Italian kid. ●

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ed by the latter, which has eggs, sausages, blood pudding, Irish soda bread and tomatoes, but I bail. The waitress lets us know that wings and mussels are on special and we end up trying some of each. We get a pound of medium wings, on for just \$3.50. "I like the sauce," Kate says of the plump wings. "It's buttery. And I like the mussels too." I agree. The wings actually have a good amount of meat on them, unlike many places that serve disgraceful, bony little things for their specials. Nothing at all wrong with the mussels either, as the white wine cream concoction has ample flavour and surprisingly, the focaccia is good. Nowhere near the same neighbourhood as my mother's, but light and airy nonetheless. We split the two ample pieces of fish and divvy up the ultra-thin deep-fried potato slices that represent the "chips" half of the equation. I was a little unsure of things when I first walked into Overtime South. It wasn't what I initially envisioned and the menu seemed like a step down from the original location. But you know what? The place is similar to the Oil throughout this courageous stretch drive in March—better than expected. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 03/25/04)

SANTA MARIA CORETTI COMMUNITY CENTRE

11050-90 St • 426-5026

I first heard of this decadent "pranzo" (brunch) through local food writers Judy Schultz and Mary Bailey, who included a nice blurb about chef Sergio Re's weekly gathering in The Food Lover's Trail Guide to Alberta. I've been dying to try it ever since. Seven courses—sounds intimidating, right? Not for me. I grew up with these types of meals. We start out with an antipasto plate. Despite the fact that Kate and I sit at a table alone, this initial platter, featuring fresh mortadella, capicollo, salami, cheese and marinated vegetables, is enough to feed a much bigger group. "This plate alone is worth \$15," says Kate, referring to the measly per-person price of the brunch. By the time course number two—a mix of perfectly done calamari and baby shrimp in a rich sauce served over rice—arrives, I notice that the numbers in this gargantuan hall are increasing exponentially. I feel like I've crashed some big Italian wedding. The pasta course is on deck. A member of our service team tells us to flag him down whenever we're ready and moments after we give the nod, he returns with a big bowl of meat tortellini in a simple tomato sauce. I give mine a good dose of grated parm and a few shots of pepper but after a small second helping, even I am starting to lose the battle against my stomach. We figure a wine break is in order. I walk outside of the room to the hallway bar and buy a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon for a mere \$15. Sure, it's only noon on Sunday and I have soccer practice in two hours, but some deals simply can't be passed up. Three courses arrive all at once: roast beef and gravy, a fish dish (with accompanying potatoes and mixed vegetables) and a bowl of salad fea-

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DISH WEEKLY

turing greens, sliced tomatoes and shredded carrots tossed in a simple vinaigrette. The broiled sole fillets are tasty, especially with a splash of lemon. Finally, there's just one course remaining. Our guy tells us that chocolate cake is the dessert this Sunday. Instinctively, I tell him that one slice will be fine to split and the kid makes me proud by suggesting that he'll ensure it's a big one. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/29/04)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153

True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy

Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

ZOCCA'S PIZZERIA

10807 Castledowns Road • 473-6339

After a trek to the city's northernmost point (my cell's signal was gone), I walk in Zocca's to find a few old boys putting away some afternoon pitchers. I grab a seat at a small table just a small leap away from the claw machine and the parquet dance floor, which I'm certain is hopping on Saturdays (\$1.99 highballs for Ladies' Night). The specials sign reveals that you can get a \$50 bar tab for your birthday ("ask server for details," it reads) and I get sad when I realize I probably couldn't even drink enough anymore to use the damn thing up. I can eat, however, and I bypass all the

baked loaves, pastas and parmigianis on the menu and go straight to the pizzas. They come in either medium or large and aside from the build-your-own options, there are also has a few gourmet specialties: the Zorba (take a guess at the items on that one), the VIP (featuring a strange mix of salami and shrimp) and the Donair. I go for the medium Cajun chicken, which features red and green peppers, onions, mushrooms, a special Cajun spice and the diced chicken. Like one of the older gents sipping on his draft, I flip through the paper while I patiently wait. After a while, the barkeep/server pops by. "It's coming," she says. "These are thick pizzas." And she puts her two hands about three inches apart to give me an idea of what to expect. She's not kidding—the pie arrives on a stylish old serving tray and it looks more like a big quiche than your typical flat pizza, maybe even thicker than the server had claimed. The dough is moist on the interior but exceptionally crispy on the outside, just the way I like it. And the toppings are loaded on, from the chunky pieces of peppers to the hearty chunks of ultra-tender, spicy chicken. They put a layer of cheese over the top but not just a few loose strands of shredded mozzarella. This is a layer with uniform consistency, like getting the bottom of your car undercoated. It's a crust in itself and this pizza is one that most definitely requires utensils. The thought of sampling some three-for-one take-out crud after trying this gem just horrifies me. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/15/04)

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- Soups _____
- Salads _____
- Breads _____
- Steaks _____
- Venison _____
- Sushi _____
- Tapas _____
- Pub Food _____
- Dim Sum _____
- Sandwiches _____
- Hamburgers _____
- French Fries _____
- Wraps _____
- Pizza _____
- Desserts _____
- Chicken Wings _____
- Smoothies/Fruit Drink _____

best restaurants

- Breakfast _____
- Bakery _____
- Coffee/Tea Shop _____
- Deli _____
- Bavarian _____
- Greek _____
- French _____
- Italian/Pasta _____
- Chinese _____
- Thai _____
- Japanese _____
- East Indian/Tandoori _____
- Mexican/Latin American _____
- Steakhouse _____
- Seafood _____
- Vegetarian _____

other bests

- Sweets _____
- Snacks (pretzels, bagels) _____
- Pre-theatre dining _____
- Restaurant for lovers _____
- Innovative menu _____
- Wine list _____
- Beer list _____
- When you only have \$10 _____
- Best when someone else is paying _____
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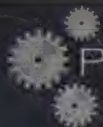
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MUSIC

Takin' care of bebop

Classic CanRock icon Randy Bachman reinvents himself as a jazzman

By JAMES ELFORD

After years of raking in money on the classic rock circuit as a studio songwriter and touring musician, Randy Bachman wants a change. Really, there's only so many times you can play "Takin' Care of Business" before the artistic challenge is gone. That's why Bachman's finally putting out that jazz album he's avoided doing for so long. Yeah, that's right—jazz.

Most people don't think of the laid-back grooves of jazz when they think of Bachman, the Canadian classic-rock elder statesman whose fame and fortune stems from the chart-topping, riff-laden, guitar-driven tunes of the Guess Who and Bachman-Turner Overdrive. But if you think that Bachman is all "American Woman" and "Let It Ride," then you ain't seen nothing

yet. With his new disc, *Randy Bachman's Jazz Thing*, the old guitar strummer shows that his love of jazz isn't rooted in a simple midlife crisis.

Bachman was introduced the guitar when another teen, future jazz musician Lenny Breau, took the young Winnipegger under his wing and infused him with an appreciation of jazz. While Bachman would

PREVIEW
JAZZ

end up falling into the easier (and more lucrative) world of rock, he would still occasionally get the jazz out on songs like "Blue Collar" and "Looking Out for Number One."

But what finally tipped the scale, and caused Bachman to create a completely jazz-oriented album? Well, kids, classic rock may fill your pockets, but after a certain point it stops feeding your soul. "I needed to do something new and stimulating and artistically challenging," Bachman says, "and this was it, [because] the classic rock thing is so easy to do. I'm excited. I'm revitalized. It has just been a given in the last

three or four years of touring with the Guess Who that [the audience was] going to like it because it was already sold out. There's no doubt. You just show up, play the classic rock note for note—everybody loves it. The memories are the same.

"To go do this is exciting," he continues. "Learning new songs, learning scales on the guitar for the first time. Never played a scale in my life—now I have to learn all these scales. It's like going out with someone and you want Chinese and they're like, 'Again? Have you ever tried Vietnamese food or Thai food?' and you go, 'No' and they say, 'It's like Chinese food but different.' So you go and you go 'Wow, that's incredible.'"

BESIDES BREAU, Bachman also drew on the two Chets as inspiration for the album: the guitar-playing of Chet Atkins, and the minimalist singing style of legendary jazz trumpeter/crooner Chet Baker. "Lenny told me to listen to the way this guy sings and plays trumpet," Bachman says. "There's all this space. I'd say, 'Space?' And he'd say, 'Yeah, ya gotta make the people wait so when you do play it, it tastes so much better.'"

But aside from "That Old Feeling," a jazz standard associated with Baker, the songs on the album are all originals, winnowed from more than 50 compositions that had been sitting around just waiting to be played. Bachman hopes that *Jazz Thing* is just the first in a wave of follow-up albums that will feature the songs he didn't have room for this time around.

While Bachman says that everything has gone smoothly so far with the first album and the accompanying live shows, the process hasn't been without its bumps. At a performance the day after his Bravo! TV special, for instance, he accidentally stepped on his own cord and pulled it out of the guitar as he was getting onstage, a mishap which prevented him from opening the show with the elaborate solo he had planned. "You know these stupid things you do when you go to play a solo," Bachman says. "I just rattled myself so much that I couldn't sit down and get calm to do this seven or eight minutes of guitar alone, so I chickened out. But I'm getting braver. This is not an easy thing. It's like walking a tightrope. I used to walk a plank and that's easier than a tightrope."

Bachman says this whole tour is about getting to the other end of that tightrope and proving himself as a jazz musician so that he feels he's earned the right to appear at jazz festivals next year. "This year I'm just a rock guy," he admits, "but next year I'll be a bona fide jazz guy with a Bravo! special, a DVD and a couple of albums out.... What's cool is people are listening to brand-new stuff. It's not comfort food like classic rock where they applaud at the end because the memory was good and tastes the same. They're applauding because you took them to a new place." ●

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Fire in the Belke

Marc Belke and Mr. Chi Pig reunite to guide SNFU into its third decade

By PHIL DUPERRON

Over the last 20 years, SNFU have weathered numerous breakups and lineup changes, but they've always managed to come out on top. There's no doubt that the Edmonton ex-pats—they've called Vancouver home for the last decade—are a Canadian punk success story. Their name is known around the world and their debut album *And No One Else Wanted to Play* is still played in dingy basements wherever spiky-haired tribes congregate. After a two-year hiatus, founding members Mr. Chi Pig and guitarist Marc Belke have once again recruited a new rhythm section—bassist Matt Warhurst and drummer Shane Smith, both part of Pig's side project Slaveco—to take SNFU back out on the road.

They've played a handful of sold-out gigs since the reformation and Belke is obviously glad to see fans old and new coming to check them out.

This last break came about because Belke was tired of touring without a new album in hand. "It just got to the point where I was like, 'Well, we're not gonna tour unless we got a new record out,'" he says. "We started recording the record and it just sort of fell apart. I felt like I was just toeing the line all the time and it just didn't seem like people were really

PREVIEW PUNK

into it. So I just gave up on it."

Belke moved to Toronto, where he figured he'd eventually finish *In the Meantime* and *In Between Time*. He continued to toil on the disc while he was taking a break from the music industry and working in an antique shop, but he wasn't really happy. He had some good songs to tinker with but the whole thing still needed a few more tunes to make it complete. As well, longtime bassist Rob "Starbuck" Johnson, who was working on the album with him, didn't seem to have his heart in the project. "He just sort of drifted away," Belke says. "I think he got frustrated or something, but it's really unclear to me because every time I tried to talk to him about it, it never really came out."

Instead of making do with Johnson's lacklustre performances, Belke moved back to Vancouver and convinced Warhurst to jump in. The young musician was excited and honoured by the offer, and his energy gave everyone else involved a renewed sense of purpose. "If I'm gonna be working on this record with SNFU," Belke says, "which is something I've been doing for 20 years and is really important to me, I'd rather have people who are going to bring energy to the project instead of people who are like, 'Is that good enough?'"

Even though SNFU enjoys legions of faithful fans, has conducted countless tours and released several records on high-profile labels like Epitaph and (briefly) Aquarius, they've never made the leap to the big time. "It's kind of a weird thing with SNFU," Belke says, "because I think we definitely have respect, but our respect comes from our fans and basically kids who come to our shows and see us and stuff. We get a lot of respect from people like that, but we definitely don't get a lot of respect from the Canadian music industry. We're still a name, but we've never been approached by a record label to do a record or anything. At this point, after this long, I don't even care."

But Belke says that after footing the bill themselves for all the recording, mixing and mastering on their new disc, he'd be very uncomfortable handing it over to a big label—even though he covets the massive promotional budget a major label would be able to supply them. Instead they'll put out at least the first run themselves in a couple months. "It just means absolutely nothing to me," Belke says. "I think the major labels are more interested in having younger bands that are sort of naive about what's going on. It's really easy to manipulate these bands that are so focused because all they want to be is stars, you know? You don't even have to offer them that much and they get excited." ●

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MUSIC



music notes

By **PHIL DUPERRON**
AND **JERED STUFFCO**

Buzz band

The Dudes • With Brundlefly • Seedy's • Fri, May 14 Among insects, the bumblebee is likely the most beloved member of a species that is otherwise feared, hated and derided by pretty much everyone. Still, that didn't stop Calgary indie rock kings the Dudes from calling their new EP *Beepuncher*. "It's partially to show that we're ruthless," chuck-

les Dudes bassist Pat Downing over the phone from a tour stop in Vancouver. "We like the imagery of a guy running around smashing bees and keeping the air clear of all those buzzing irritants."

Right. Despite being some of the most un-ruthless cats on the block, the disc is a pretty fist-punching affair. After self-producing their debut *This Guy's the Limit* back in 2002, this time around the band decided to enlist the services of Calgary über-producer Dave Alcock, a guy whose production résumé is longer than Scott Weiland's rap sheet and twice as diverse.

Along with six brand-new tracks, the disc also contains the Dudes' trademark song, "Dropkick Queen of the Weekend." Even though the song is a couple years old, the decision to re-record the fan fave was a no-brainer. "Since we were going into a real studio this time," Drummond says, "we decided to re-record it. We also have a new drummer who didn't play

on the original, and he really likes it. That, and it's a really fun song."

With their new disc in tow, the band's current itinerary takes the trio across Canada and into Ontario and Quebec for the first time. "It's all pretty much baby steps with us," Drummond says, "because we're a totally independent band. The farthest we'd ever been was Winnipeg, and people kept telling us about the Big Smoke and luring us with words like 'big market,' so we figured it was time to go and check it out ourselves. We really do enjoy playing, though, and we have a lot of pride in our tunes. If you have a professional attitude, no one's going to feel cheated." (JS)

13 going on '70s

Rock'n • With Freeburn • Seedy's • Sat, May 15 "We've written the perfect album," proclaims guitarist Rick Rock'n over the phone from his Vancouver pad. "We never

Friday May 14th
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have to write another song for the rest of our careers."

That's a pretty bold statement considering the record in question clocks in at a grand total of 13 minutes. However, when you call up a member of the band Rock'n for an impromptu phone interview, outlandish comments become the norm. "By never recording or writing again, we'll avoid the sophomore slump too," Rock'n continues. "Once people see us they'll understand."

Thirteen minutes, though? To paraphrase the Dude, these guys must be into the whole brevity thing. "What we've done is taken out all the filler," Rock'n explains. "Most albums only have five good songs anyways, so we've just eliminated the songs that weren't really making it."

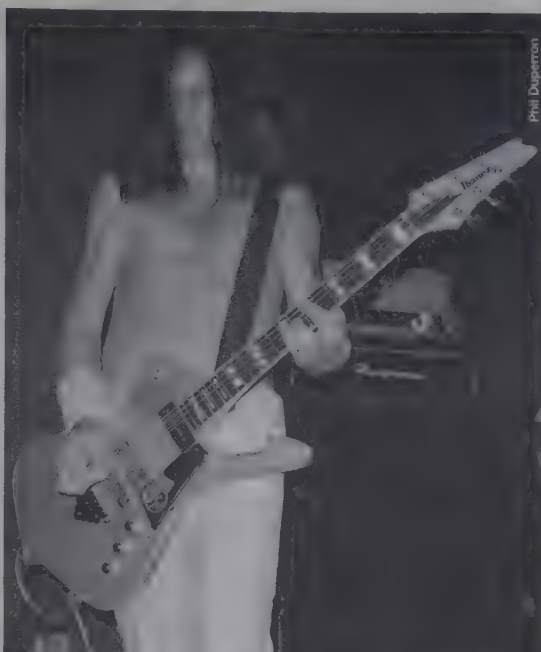
Fair enough. Formed a few years ago through a shared love of '70s arena rock practitioners like Kiss, the members of Rock'n are musical revisionists and they make no apologies for it. "The only music we're interested in is music from the '70s," Rock'n explains. "I can see how newer music might be interesting for other people, but if we did it, it would be like wearing a tuxedo or something." According to Rock'n, instead of copying the latest trends and trying to stay current, the band decided to concentrate on writing huge stadium-sized riffs and keeping things simple à la AC/DC.

With an approach like this, it might be easy to simply lump these guys into the same shitpile as bands like the Darkness, whose tongue-in-cheek take on cock-rock has landed them on the top of the charts on both sides of the Atlantic. Not so, warns Rick. "Those guys are more of a Boston/Back Company kind of thing," he says. "We're more like leather jackets and balls-to-the-walls rock." (IS)

plain and simple

plainsay • With Rally Cap and Racing to Red Lights • The Powerplant • Sat, May 15 Local pop-rockers plainsay have been creating engaging melodic music for nearly six years now. The problem is, because all four of them have real jobs like teaching, the band is forced to take a backseat. They recorded a decent five-song demo back in 2001, but only now are they putting the finishing touches on their first professional recording. "We're kinda slow going," says singer/guitarist Mat Halton. "We've been burning the midnight oil with the band."

Haltoun, who's joined by brother Jon on guitar, bassist Tim Wilson and drummer Tyrm Armstrong, has been recording in 1000 Decibels, a new studio in Edmonton, for the last few months. The band should have their EP out to the public by the end of June, but they haven't found a label to release it. "We're gonna do the DIY thing," Haltoun says, "just in terms of getting it out to friends and family and off the website [www.plainsay.com] plus playing lots of shows and selling it off the back of the tailgate kinda thing. Right now we're just focusing on getting the thing done. As soon as that's done, we just want to get out and play lots of shows, start getting down into Calgary and all



U2's Overall • New City • Wed, May 5 • REVUE When I first heard Chicago's U2's Overall were coming back together, I really wasn't that excited. Initially, I never really had a high opinion about the band, mostly due to their over-the-top attitude going under the biggest punk rock I could find. But these dudes really put on a good show: 1970s-style glam rock for the '90s in the 21st century—it was like a time warp with guitars, drums, and horns playing out the days of the Black Sabbath, now have taken them out of commission for a few years but their return was like a brand-new, high-uplifting, vaguely familiar and mind-blowingly cool. The wardrobe fans who liked them when they were still playing dives were upfront the whole time in a near-religious fervor. It was only when they grudgingly played "Girl, You'll Be a Woman Soon" that the rest of the crowd stepped up. Some things never change. (PD)

around B.C. and Alberta."

With many wicked bands of all genres vying for attention in this city, plainspoken know they have their work cut out for them. "It's always a struggle," Halton says, "especially since we're doing so much ourselves. It's just a matter of us getting out there. Basically, the amount of fans and buzz created is proportional to how much legwork we're doing. We're all pretty busy, but we're doing what we can with the time we have. But I'm feeling pretty optimistic." (PD)

snic and twisted

snic • Stars • Sat, May 15 Talking with snic bassist Travis Murdoch is like having a massive acid flashback. I'd heard the good buzz floating around the young five-piece hardcore/metal act, so I figured I'd give Murdoch a call and see what they're all about. Things seemed normal enough (except, of course, the band's obvious allergy to capital letters) as he discussed their self-recorded EP *the palindrome seeing* when suddenly out slips a doozy. "Pretextation, abstraction, confusion protrude from a portly bedfellow with very little to wear and oh so many scabs," he says. "I know?"

No, I don't know. I ask him to explain himself and out pops another. "A rope over the abyss is no different than an abyss anyways. All apologies

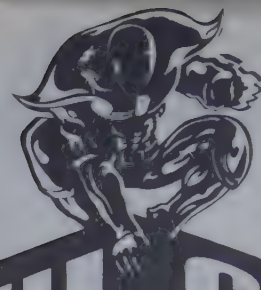
to the hermit we consider rejected."

Aha. I figure Murdoch's just read a bit too much Aleister Crowley, but he claims he's unfamiliar with the Great Beast. Probably a good thing. The last thing the world needs is another hardcore band with a screaming lunatic of a bass player fired up on Crowley's disturbing and confusing magical rantings. He'd probably end up summoning a demon by accident. Besides, it sounds like Murdoch's got his own problems. Between squeezing and teasing the fluids out of a radish and torturing other vegetables and legumes for kicks, the band spends its time rehearsing for their upcoming full-length disc and hunting after a mythical beast.

"We're trying to catch the metaphysical piranha," Murdoch says. "It's the hardest fish to catch."

But what would they ever do if they caught it? "We'd cast our rod over the side of the vessel, because we won't really be needing it."

After our perplexing conversation, I decided a little further research was in order, so I checked out the band's website (www.hxcmp3.com/bands/2028) in hopes of gaining some enlightenment. Unfortunately, the band's obsession with obscure and confusing language extends into their virtual world as well. There are, however, a couple of hard-hitting tracks available there too, which show they're as talented as they are demented and weird. (PD)



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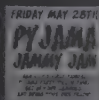
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WEEKLY

YOUR GUIDE TO LIVE MUSIC IN EDMONTON

(concert): \$10 (adv); tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757

YARDBIRD SUITE Randy Bachman's Jazz Thing; 7:30 (door), 8pm (show) and 9:30pm (door); 10pm (show); \$24 (member)/\$28 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

ZEHARI'S Paylene Lyon Trio and Echo

SAVOY Funk w/ Bob Trampoline and Ben

THE STANDARD 5pm Thursdays: Connected Sessions Vol 1 (CD release party) featuring Nestor Delano, Tripswitch, Luke Morrison

STARS NIGHTCLUB Thursday Slam: Jimlimes and Thedy, Misty, Haffiya, Sweet, Alomak, Jareed, Xu

VILVET LOUNGE Urban Substance: hip hop/R&B end of exams jam with Spynoise, Inevitable, L-Money, Sean B

YOUR APARTMENT Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk; 60s pop with DJ; Travay and Alex Zwill

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Penny's Whistle

BLUES ON BRYANT Perpetrators

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Suite 33 (pop/rock)

CRACKED REEF Andrew Glover Trio, 4-7pm

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SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Jimmy Whiffen

SIDETRACK CAFE Delorme; 9pm; \$10

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URBAN LOUNGE Exit 303, The

CARF SELECT Bonnie Gregory and Bob Taylor (Celtic harp and guitar); 6:30-9pm

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STONEHOUSE PUB Alternative, house, hip hop, top 40 with DJ Rage and DJ Weeds; 9pm

BUCKLE UP! ambient/IDM/electronic by Ariel and Roel

Y AFTERHOURS House/breakbeat with Tripswitch, Sureback, MC Floppo, UP, Lucy, Dragon, Old Bitch

FOUR APARTMENT House with DJ Tonick

SEEDY'S Freeburn

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Jimmy Whiffen

SIDETRACK CAFE The Claydon Bellman, Dan, The Claydon, 9pm; \$7

URBAN LOUNGE Exit 303; \$5

VALENTINE'S LIVE! Lariat Cinema Quartet; 8pm; (door), 9pm (show); \$15 (\$10 student/senior); tickets available at the Square 420-1757

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BLACK DOG Hair of the Dog; 4-6pm

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STEVEN JOHNSON (Instrumental Jazz), Zed (rock), The Wordbeat Band (variety), The Chetobellows (rock), The Issues (rap rock), Tommy Shaul (contemporary alternative), Waydrip hop, Won 18 (hip hop) and others; 1pm-2am; all ages event

RENEZVOUS Cate, iDop, Some Won Spit

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GUILTY MARTINI Housegroove with DJ Sunny

IRON HORSE Urban dance party with DJ 420

THE JOINT Get a Nightlife: top 40/dance/urban

MANHATTAN CLUB Sinful Saturdays: top 40/dance

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL DJ Shawn Z

NEW CITY SUBURBS Saturdays: U.C.K.: punk/alt/pop/dance with Blue Jay and Nikoleeja

ORLANDO'S & PUMI AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hill, 9pm

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butler

THE ROOST Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, new music with DJ Dan and Mike. **Downstairs:** Retro music; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday: dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Deep house with Winston Roberts

STARS NIGHTCLUB Live music night with Brian

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Clay

THINK AFTER DANCE Uncensored Saturdays: R&B, hip hop, old school with Urban

YOUR APARTMENT Nordic foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and Rackman Powers

YOUNG AFTER DANCE Uncensored Saturdays: R&B, hip hop, old school with Urban

YOUR APARTMENT Nordic foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and Rackman Powers

MON LIVE MUSIC

ARTS BARNES Michelle Knoblach, Kenton Thomas, Potemkin Village; \$6, 468-2598/420-1757

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Backlist; 3pm-midnight; no cover

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL The Rusty Reed Band; 7:30-11:30pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE King Musika (6-piece ska/reggae band)

CARGO AND JAMES TEA SHOPS Open stage with Bob Reichardt; 7:10pm

ECCO PUB Open jam session hosted by Imaginary Friend (live, acoustic); 4-8pm

NEW CITY LIRKED LOUNGE Wednesday: Night Heroes

O'BRYNE'S Joe Bird's Irie Jam

PRINCE OF WALES ARMOURY Rolanda Lee and the Canadian Allstars Jazz Band featuring Alan Muirhead (trumpet); 1pm (door), 2pm (show); \$20 (incl. food); tickets available by phone at 488-5043

REVERE UNITED CHURCH Jazz and Reflections: Tommy Banks and PJ Perry; 3:30-5pm; 435-8170

ROSEBOWL Jam with Mike McDonald; 10pm

SIDETRACK CAFE Under the Covers: Sundays: Superhoney, DJ Dudeman; 9pm; \$6

WINSPER CENTRE Sunday Showcase: Presented by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra featuring Katherine Chi (piano), Jeremy Spurgeon (organist), William Eddins (conductor); 2pm, tickets start at \$20, student/senior discounts available. \$15 student rush seating available from the box office one hour prior to concert; tickets available at Winsper box office 428-1108

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MEIN CITY LIRKED LOUNGE Atmosphere: Funk, rare groove, hip hop with DJ Cool Curt

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SAVOY French Pop: mixed with Delta DJ

SUCKABOWL Multipurpose: eclectic electronic hosted by Prosper and DJ with guests

THE BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 101 St. 424-0400

CONVOCACTION HALL U of A Campus, 420-1757/436-7932

COOR COUNTRY SALOON 8010 Gateway Blvd, 432-2665

COWBOYS 10102-180 St. 481-8739

CRISTAL LOUNGE 10336 Jasper Ave, 426-7521

DANTE'S WORLD PUB 370 St, Stony Plain Road, 486-4448

DECADANCE 10018-105 St, 990-1792

DONKIA 10177-99 St, 429-3338

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave, 454-9928

DUSTER'S 6402-118 Ave, 474-5554

ECCO PUB 9605-86 Ave, 435-5058

EMPIRANT AND CASTLE ON WHYTE 10314-82 Ave, 439-4545

ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE WEM, 489-1330

EXPRESSIONS CAFE Eastwood Community Hall, 86 St, 118 Ave, 473-9125

FATBOYZ 6104-104 St, 437-3633

CAPITAL HILL PUB 14203 Stony Plain Rd, 454-3063

CARGO AND JAMES TEA SHOPS 10634-82 Ave, 433-8152

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EDMONTON (edmonton Centre, 102 Ave, Entrance, 426-4767)

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GOLDEN HARVEST PUB, 127 St, 447-4357

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THE JOINT WEM 486-3013

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LEGENDS 6104-122 St, 481-2786

LONGRIDERS 11733-78 St, 479-7400

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Down from the Delta

How Fat Possum Records is preserving a vanishing American artform

By JENNY FENIAK

The more I think about the story of the blues, with the awful truths it tells and the heartstrings it tugs, the more I realize it's a story we all know. Yet the story of Fat Possum Records and their attempts to preserve a dying art takes place worlds away from our prairie home. You could say our gophers match their possums, our trout their catfish and our marijuana their moonshine whiskey.

But life in the heartland of America is nothing like our placid existence in the Great White North. The Mississippi Delta is one of the poorest, sickest and saddest places on earth. Infant mortality is sky high, education levels have hit rock bottom, crack cocaine has ravaged the population and their cultural foothold, the Delta blues, is on the brink of extinction. But the "dirty blues" are still being played in the dusty corners of the Delta by a few old folks, and one young white man has taken it upon himself to record what he can before it all slips away. It's a burning passion that started with a single wish.

"I just wanted to make an R.L. Burnside record," says Matthew Johnson, the 35-year-old president of Fat Possum Records. A history major at "Ole Miss" (Mississippi State University), Johnson used to frequent the juke joints in small towns around Greenville, listening to nobody bluesmen wail away into the night. "[Burnside] used to play locally and I just thought he was great," Johnson says. "So I was like, 'Fuck it—I'll put this record out.'" With a \$4,000 student loan, Johnson founded Fat Possum Records and began staking out watering holes and chasing rumours about the last of the great Delta bluesmen.

He struck a distribution deal with Capricorn Records that almost immediately soured. "I did everything wrong from a business stand point—I mean, literally," Johnson explains, sounding exhausted and drained as he explains how his label has been plagued since its inception in 1991 by legal woes and bankrupt-

cy court. "I guess I should have quit before—some days I think that."

Johnson finished his degree, but it was more for the extra money he could collect from additional student loans than a desire to pursue a "legitimate" career. By 1996, Fat Possum had caught the attention of Epitaph president Andy Kaulkin—"a blues freak," Johnson says—and their relationship held together longer than Johnson ever expected. "We were completely unsuccessful probably for the last six years, except maybe two or three years ago. We finally turned a corner and we didn't just operate at, like, negative \$800,000 a year, y'know? We got close to breaking even."

LAST MONTH, however, Epitaph decided it had enough with Fat Possum's uneven financial prospects and closed the door on their relationship. "As far as divorces go, it was like, 'I just don't want your toothbrush next to mine.' It wasn't like *[The Jerry Springer Show]*. The damn Capricorn thing was like the *Springer* show—really. It was like taking a thousand hits of acid and running across the desert. It was that horrible."

Regardless of the legal and financial disasters, Johnson has persisted with his mission not only to seek out the last of the great blues players, but to convince a new generation to embrace them. Over the years, Johnson slowly opened up the scope of Fat Possum's mandate to sign acts like Bob Log III and the Black Keys, who brought a modern sensibility to the label. He's also made inroads facilitating collaborations between some of Fat Possum's most popular veterans like Burnside and Junior Kimbrough with young acts like the Beastie Boys and the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion. Right now, Johnson's working on a tribute album for Kimbrough, who died late last year after a fight with pancreatic cancer; it'll include tracks from Iggy Pop and Mark Lanegan.

The interest of a new generation is

the lifeblood Fat Possum desperately needs to carry on. Johnson literally began recording this rare breed of bluesmen just in the nick of time, because they're dying off right under his nose. "I'm sure there's somebody I missed," Johnson says, "but that's the exception. I mean, it used to be, like, every little town there'd be two or

PREVIEW BLUES

three that played out of a town of 400 people and at least some of them were okay. Some were just so-so, but there was always somebody who could actually do something. But they're all fucking gone. I'd get there and hear, 'Oh, they just died. You should have been here a month ago.'"

IT'S A SAD SITUATION, one Johnson is getting tired of revisiting. Most of Fat Possum's artists are seniors and have lived the kind of hard lives that most of us would can barely imagine. One of the most animated and popular of the bunch is T-Model Ford who, even at the age of 82 (or so he guesses), is kickin' harder than ever.

Johnson describes Ford as "a happy-go-lucky psychopath, chock-full of bizarre confessions" who he discovered back in 1995 stompin' away with his drummer Spam in a

smoky little juke joint hollerin' about kickin' his woman in the ass. "I think I'm the oldest one on the game now," Ford says with his thick, long drawl over the phone from somewhere in the middle of Kansas. "I'm still kickin' hard."

Talking to Ford is a glimpse into the kind of life on the Delta that's become mythological. Completely illiterate, he once spent 24 hours at the Seattle airport because he didn't recognize his name on the promoter's pick-up card. "I can't write nuthin' and I can't spell what I love, but I'm making it," says Ford of the four albums he's recorded since signing with Fat Possum. "I'm gonna try and make another one when I get home. It's gonna be about how the ladies is treatin' mens and how the mens is treatin' their ladies." Women are a hot topic with Ford and life on the road has only spurred his passion. "You enjoy yourself," he says. "You get to see a whole lotta things you wouldn't see and meet a whole lotta women—the white ones and the black ones and I always like to ride 'em pretty hard—yessss indeed, baby!"

THAT'S NOT A SENTIMENT you'd ever expect to hear from a man in his 80s who has 26 children, but Ford is full of them. Perhaps he's simply making up for a less-than-ideal youth. As a child, Ford was beat by

his father with firewood between the legs so badly he lost a testicle. Before Ford was 20, his father ran off with his first of five wives—the second one was poisoned and another tried to slit his throat. The parents of another of his wives tried to poison him, but he survived only to be shot, stabbed and sentenced to a chain gang for killing a man himself. It wasn't until he was 58 that his last wife bought him his first guitar. As he recalls, "I say, 'What you spending my money on somethin' like that as old as I am? I can't play no guitar.'" But after listening to Muddy Waters, Jim Reed and Howlin' Wolf, Ford found his own raw stomp and has been pumping it out ever since. "I learnt myself," he says. "Ain't nobody teach me nuthin'."

Johnson says Ford's vitality is exceptional, but he won't be around forever and when he disappears, another living sound of the Delta will vanish with him, real and raw and never to be repeated. As far as Fat Possum's future is concerned, Johnson's managed to hold on this long and as he repeats it one last time, his company's motto makes a little more sense: "We're trying our best!"

THE FAT POSSUM JUKE JOINT CARAVAN

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street
vision

BY SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

Carr dealership

Last Friday, a group of more than 700 unsuspecting regulars at the Joint were exposed to a side of the urban market they'd never witnessed firsthand as eight of Edmonton's best MCs went toe to toe to compete for a shot at having their music pressed and distributed by Universal Music Canada. After a bit of controversy (including one unpopular decision by

the judges), Gord "Karnage" Carr was the last man standing.
The controversy came when Nekkbone, one of the combatants, was eliminated early in the tournament, even though many onlookers (including Carr himself) thought he'd actually beaten Carr. Afterwards, Carr beat Rek in the best-of-three finals.
Carr's no stranger to the winner's circle. He's a perennial underdog who constantly pulls a trick out of his hat at the very last minute. This time, that trick came at the expense of Emcee E, who was booted from the competition when he violated the competition's ban on racial slurs. (Emcee E referred to Carr by using the N-word. Despite the fact that Carr is white, the ruling was justified.)
"That was the one rule, and everybody knew it," Carr says. "Technique is more than just letting your tongue fly—it's also knowing when to hold your tongue. I knew Emcee E's history

from the past couple of battles for getting into racial comments. I knew he was easily provoked, and as a battle rapper I'm going to exploit that. I



guess I did kind of bait him—a little."
Carr's mastery of the psychology of the battlefield has been one of his biggest assets. But even though he's currently at work penning songs for his first full-length album, Carr feels he's been pigeonholed as a battle rapper—a title that implies quick wit but a lack of depth. But if it takes a few battle victories to draw attention to the more complex work he's doing in the meantime with his group Hi-Calibre, Carr doesn't mind. "To me, opportunity is everything," he says. "This is what we're here for. A couple hundred bucks is nice, but we've all got jobs. If you're using hip-hop as a source of finance, you're getting into tricky water. To me, it's always been about the opportunity."
As far as the audience at the Joint goes, Carr says it was different from the crowd he's used to, but he welcomed the challenge just the same. Many of his competitors say they were

a little taken aback to find themselves performing in front of so many girls in their late teens and early 20s—a very different constituency from the usual all-male crowds of "heads" who typically attend battles.
Even within the local community, Carr says it's often difficult to impress his peers. Carr compares the scene to a barrel full of crabs, all clawing to get themselves out and pulling each other down in the process. So when it comes time to submit his music to Universal, Karnage may already be a step ahead of the competition. "The only common logic people can come up with to outdo each other is to outbrag them or outboast them," he says. "He's alright, but I'm pretty fly. I kick iller rhymes. I get all the women. I got all the money." A lot of people, including myself, are sick and tired of it and are trying to change it to bring forth more of an intellectual way of speaking: with poetry and rhythm." ●

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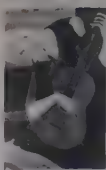
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root down

By JENNY FENIAK

Spoon croons tunes

Rae Spoon • The Sugarbowl • Thu, May 13 The outlaw and the folksinger: Rae Spoon embodies both archetypes and redefines both of them for the modern age. This 23-year-old Calgary-bred singer, songwriter and banjo player is going where no man or woman has gone before.

He's the ultimate cowboy girl—that's what women were first called

when they stepped into the man's role on the ranch. But Spoon's 10-gallon hats, work pants and macho country songs can't disguise the smooth and powerful female voice that delivers them—and occasionally delivers a little transgender education into the bargain.

Spoon has been playing music since his teens and launched himself into the public eye with his independent 2001 EP *Honking at Minivans*. He's played every small town from coast to coast several times, usually departing in the spring, working through the festival season and making it back home to the west coast just before the snow starts flying through the Rockies. After just a few years on the circuit, Spoon's résumé includes performances at the North and South Country Fairs, the Vancouver Folk Festival and Gay Prides in Vancouver, Victoria and San Francisco. This year he's been invited to

play at the Edmonton and Calgary folk festivals.

By the winter of 2002, Spoon was ready to record again and turned to Tolan McNeil, a key player in the west coast music community and the roommate of Canada's quintessential quirky cowgirl, Carolyn Mark. "Tolan has a little studio in the basement in the house," Spoon says of his full-length debut, *Throw Some Dirt on Me*, "and it took us, like, four days and a ton of musicians. Carolyn came down and played some tambourine."

Although he usually tours the long distances as a solo act, Spoon will be coming to Edmonton with his drummer and stand-up bass player—but as far as he's concerned, the more the merrier. "I had a show when I left with a seven-piece band," Spoon says. "I have more of a collective of revolving people coming in and out, whoever's in town. It's like the biggest band on the west coast."

Reeves receives reprieve

Mark Reeves • With Easily Amused • Sidetrack Café • Fri, May 14 Winnipeg roots rocker Mark Reeves is no stranger to Edmonton. He's played our fair city numerous times both as a solo act and with band projects such as Apteckman. Now Reeves has joined forces with local distribution company Spirit River and will be re-releasing his third independent album, *Sure Is a Pretty Name*.

"It's weird that an artist gets a chance to go, 'Let me try that again,'" Reeves says. "In some ways it's not as exciting as a brand-new CD, but it's kinda cool. Now I have a chance to put a video on a CD, which I've never done." Reeves is referring to the footage he shot for his single "V-Dub" which will be released next month along with the album. It's not the first time Reeves has ventured into the visual world; he was nominated for Best

Songwriter and Best Video at the Prairie Music Awards for the single "Leon's Lounge" off his 1998 release *Takes a While to Get Like This*.

Having gotten a second shot at releasing his album, Reeves is determined not to waste the opportunity. For one thing, he's completely rearranged the order of the tracks after remixing five of them, adding some more backup vocals and replacing the art depicting him staring wistfully from under the brim of a cowboy hat. "People just thought immediately: 'country,'" Reeves says. "The single we're putting out is a real funk thing—Prince could do it. It's funky and it's happy and it's like, 'Okay, that isn't country.'"

The album will be out in time for Reeves's turn at the festival circuit and will tide him over until he gets the chance to head back to his log cabin in Ontario where he'll put pen to paper and once again work his acoustic magic. ●



bpm

By DAVID STONE

The Savage is loose

What a marvelous time to be in this city. So the weather has been spastic—big deal. There still isn't much of a good reason to stay home over the next few weeks, unless you're dead broke and eating boxes of Kraft Dinner. And I mean the actual boxes, not the concentrated orange death food itself.

The Standard is always a good place to go on a Thursday night if you dig the funky sound of big room house music, and over the past year the boys of Connected have been trying hard to bring the best of the world to the room for their Spin night. Of course, it wouldn't be a solid place if it weren't for the residents, and **Nestor Delano** has been holding down the beat from day one. It's no surprise that he should be the one to helm the first *Connection Sessions* mixed disc, which will be officially released at a kickoff party tonight (Thursday) at the club. Fellow residents Tripswitch and Luke Morrison will be on hand to build up the rhythm before Delano gives us a taste of the hard-hitting funk he's laid on the disc.

Out in the west end, Escape Ultra Lounge has proven to be an outstanding venue for the European sounds of progressive and trance, with such names as Ferry Corsten, Lisa Lashes, Judge Jules and DJ Dan gracing the DJ booth over the past few months. On Wednesday, May 19, the very talented and very glam DJ **Anne Savage** will be flying over from her native United Kingdom with a crate full of the latest hard house, euphoric trance and crowd-pleasing techno. She's not alone on this journey, however, as techno don **D.A.V.E. the Drummer** will be in the booth with a set of his own addictive

techno creations. Although his roots stretch back into the U.K. acid techno movements—he's done his share of squat parties with Chris Liberator back in the day—D.A.V.E. has seen his music embraced by a number of DJs across the spectrum, from Carl Cox to Sasha. Opening up the show is none other than my dear old drinking buddy and Foosh kingpin Tryptomene. You can grab your tickets for this killer show at Foosh, Underground, Colourblind, Sunkissed Tanning and Ticketmaster.

The folks in Stellar are back with another off-beat venue party this Saturday, this time at the Regal Cafe and Bar in Telus Plaza downtown. The party, dubbed **A Nite For The People**, features DJs Chris James from Red Deer, Jack Flash and Thomas Anderson. Doors open at 10 p.m. and tickets are a mere \$8 at the door.

It's also good to see that Subterranean Sound has noticed a lack of a weekly drum 'n' bass night in Edmonton, and decided to do something about it. Hence, next Friday (May 21), they're kicking off **Vital** at DecaDance with a special appearance by old school legend Tee Bee. What's cool about Vital is the fact that it won't be a wall-to-wall gut compressor of rushing hi-hats—the plan for the weekly is all about the wide array of breakbeats, which means you'll hear a steady progression from hip hop to jump up and ragga through the night. You can see how this is going to work out just from the list of residents who have signed up on the roster—Mumps, Shortee, Propa, LP, Sweetz, Shaolin, Mista Hellfiya and Rude D. Big up to the Sub Sound crew!

And finally, fans of hard house have a reason to buy some new dancing shoes, thanks to the new +4 Productions team. They've booked the Starlite Room on Saturday, June 5 for the Canadian debut of the original Tidy Girl, **Lisa Pin-Up**. She's turned down offers from North America for the last decade, but I guess the combination of Y Afterhours residents Anthony Donohue and Darcy Klein (who are opening the show) was enough to convince her to finally get on a plane and rock our city. Advance tickets are \$16 and available at the usual joints. ●

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Do they get a big dressing room?

Don't let the wacky antics fool you—the Salads are more than a bunch of tossers

By JERED STUFFCO

It's only one show into a lengthy 28-date, cross-Canada jaunt and the Salads' Grant Taylor is already feeling a little under the weather. "I'm nursing a bit of a headache," admits the drummer over the phone from a tour stop in Langley, British Columbia.

Apparently, when your band teams up with rock acts Out of Your Mouth, Social Code and CanRock heroine Bif Naked, there's some pretty serious party action to be had. "I've already met everyone in the other bands on the tour, and last night we got into some beer drinking after the show," Taylor concedes. "There's a lot of pot smokers on this tour—Bif Naked is a clean-living girl, though, and you can tell just by looking at her. The rest of us?" He pauses to chuckle. "Well, I've got a beer gut and it looks like I've got a kid on the way."

Maybe he should think about pacing himself. Or maybe not—a constant hangover is a small price to pay for the exposure his band will garner from the current tour, which ought to more than make up for the copious amounts of Advil and black coffee that he'll be consuming over the course of the next month. "These are the best tours to be on," Taylor agrees, "because you get to play in front of the headliner's crowd and you can win them over."

Winning people over has become a constant objective for the Toronto-based Salads, who despite having the worst Canadian band name since Rainbow Butt Monkeys, are a pretty sick live act. Maybe it's because they've spent an enormous amount of time on the road. Since solidifying their lineup in 1999, the notoriously unpretentious and irreverent band has been touring

like madmen, shared bills along the way with the likes of Fishbone, Blink-182 and Our Lady Peace.

According to Taylor, the band's live performances, which apparently include some pretty serious guitar shredding and feature more wacky escapades than a Chevy Chase movie, often take on a life of their own. "We'll do the *Top Gun* theme or we'll break into *Miami Vice*," he says. "All in all, we're just out to have fun. A lot of times we're just playing for ourselves. Sometimes we shoot ourselves in the foot or we trainwreck—it depends on how many pints we've had."

DESPITE THE WACKINESS and the booze and drug references, these dudes aren't just a bunch of slackers. Along with an impressive list of live appearances, they've also managed to put out two independent

full-length albums and an EP, and their video for the single "Get Loose" was nominated for a MuchMusic Video Award last year.

The Salads' notoriously unbridled sound, which blends influences as incongruous as punk, ska and meta into a rollicking brew of frothy fun, is shown to full effect on the band's latest LP, 2003's *Fold A to B*. Though the band has been difficult to pigeonhole, Taylor says their eclectic approach has paid off. "I think we've had a hard time finding one [musical] style and going with it," he says. "I think we've scared a lot of people off because of that, but we've also attracted a lot of people too."

Once the band completes their current tour, they'll reassemble in the studio to complete work on a new full-length. "We've already written about four tunes," he says, "so when we get back, we're going to hole up and get down."

Let's hope the hangovers have subsided by then. ●

THE SALADS

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Me so Thornley

After Big Wreck lived up to its name, Ian Thornley found a new band to take its place

By DAVE JOHNSTON

Whatever name you give it, you still need a family. Ian Thornley once had a band called Big Wreck. They were his family. Then, two years ago, Big Wreck ceased to be, but a larger family has arisen around Thornley to take its place: last year, the Toronto-bred musician got married and welcomed a baby daughter into his life, and the effect has been transforming. "I finally understand the idea of being home-sick," he quips.

Domestic bliss hasn't dulled his passion for music, though. The band that bears his surname has a new record in stores called *Come Again*, and it's filled with a diverse range of honest-to-God modern rock anthems, helmed by one of the hottest producers around and underwritten by one of the biggest players in modern rock.

Thornley's optimism is tempered

by his experience with Big Wreck, whose demise he blames on the frustration of never achieving the promise of bigger and better things. "We constantly felt that we had a carrot dangled in front of us," Thornley explains. "There was no 'I-quit-no-you're-fired' or anything. It was pretty amicable. At the end of the last tour, we just looked at each other and said, 'You know what, boys? It's been fun, but let's move on.'"

Thornley had no intention of starting a new band, but one ended

PREVIEW ROCK

up finding him regardless. Bassist Ken Tizzard came along following the demise of the Watchmen, who had co-headlined a cross-country tour with Big Wreck, while former Edwin drummer Sekou Lumumba played on some of Thornley's demos. The latest addition is guitarist Tavis Stanley, who was living with the drummer from Big Sugar and came at the recommendation of Gordie Johnson. "It sort of happened organically," Thornley says. "The timing was right, the guys were in other bands, and when it became bona fide, everybody jumped ship."

A new record deal came from

another old friend, Chad Kroeger, who had been a fan since Nickelback opened for Big Wreck on a tour. Kroeger signed the new band to his 604 Records imprint, which opened up the door to Roadrunner Records. "They make me want to work harder—not just for me, but because they give a fuck," Thornley says.

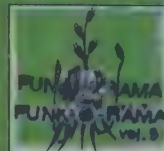
Another friend, Juno Award-winning producer Gavin Brown, who was enjoying success with Three Days Grace and Billy Talent, was easily recruited to work on *Come Again*. "I can't see me doing a record with anyone else," Thornley says. "I'll start a sentence and he'll finish it—musically, anyway. It's like we speak in shorthand."

"There's the thing," he continues. "You can write songs for your buddies sitting in the basement, but I want to write songs that are played on the radio for millions of people that love them and sing along with them at shows. I've been blessed with brutal honesty and good friends, and that's been my credo this whole time around. Maybe everything is happening now because of that. I dunno." ●

THORNLEY

With guests • The Starlite Room • Thu, May 20

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NEW SOUNDS

BOB WISEMAN
IT'S TRUE
(BLOCKS RECORDING CLUB)

He's inspired a generation of alternative artists in Toronto, confused the conventional, amused the moody, annoyed the powerful and impressed the impressive. Bob Wiseman, singer/songwriter, cantankerous truth-teller and manic musical virtuoso, has just released his seventh studio recording, *It's True*, through the co-operative efforts of Blocks Recording Club. A lo-fi musical creeper, *It's True* dispenses Dr. Robert's usual prescription of cheek and yearning. Fans of 1997's cacophonous masterwork *More Work Songs From The Planet of the Apes* may have wondered what Wiseman's been up to the past seven years. After dabbling in film scores and other people's music (including a stint with the Hidden Cameras), Wiseman returns to his songwriting roots with nine new songs and the official release of "My Cousin Dave," an open letter to David Geffen. Less overtly political but no less passionate than

previous efforts, Wiseman's songs capture vivid snapshots of love ("Born to Love You"), cruelty ("Lori," "Uranium"), humanity ("What Was Once Wild," "300 Bloor St. W. Wednesday Night") and parking ("Fluke, Fluke, Fluke"). Heavy themes are cast in the spartan sounds of strumming guitars and whimsical keyboards. *It's True* secures Wiseman's place among bona fide Canadian originals like Kris Demeanor, Dale Morningstar and Veda Hille. ★★★★★ —LISA GREGOIRE

DIVISION OF LAURA LEE
DAS NOT COMPUTE
(BURNING HEART/EPITAPH)

When Division of Laura Lee whipped out *Black City* back in 2002, they drew immediate comparisons to fellow Swedes the Hives on account of their common love of rhythm and raw hooks. DOLL may not have kitted themselves in swank matching outfits, but what they lacked in aesthetic sense they made up for in foot-stomping aplomb—in other words, a perfect slice

of what was becoming the Swedish garage rock sound. Thankfully, *Das Not Compute* isn't a continuation of that caricature. Instead, DOLL adds dollops of '60s British psychedelia and spooky keyboard atmospherics to their punchy, four-on-the-floor drive. "Does Compute" kicks off the disc with some buzzing guitars and a breakneck rhythm broken by an unabashedly pop chorus. There are also faint echoes of Jesus and Mary Chain on tracks like "Sneaking Up on Mr. Prez" and "Breathe Breathe," while Cardigans vocalist Nina Persson doses the propulsive "Dirty Love" with some extra snottiness. It's the kind of garage rock that doesn't hang on fashion and sticks to what sounds good instead. How functional. How ideal. How, er, Swedish. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

YOUNG HEART ATTACK
MOUTHFUL OF LOVE
(XL/BEGGARS GROUP)

This group of Texans have made it their goal to rock the shit out of you and their debut disc, *Mouthful of Love*, makes good on that objective with songs full of frenzied guitars and wailing vocals that recall the glory days of AC/DC and contemporaries such as the Datsuns.

What makes Young Heart Attack unique is their dual lead vocals, which tempers the screeching of their typical male rock singer with the Neko Case-like sheen of female vocalist Jennifer Stephens. *Mouthful of Love* showcases the band's roots in classic rock: they nick the synthesizer line from the Who's "Won't Get Fooled Again" for "Starlite"

and use Led Zep's slow-building jam from "Black Country Woman" as a basis for "Take Me Back" Mary Jane.

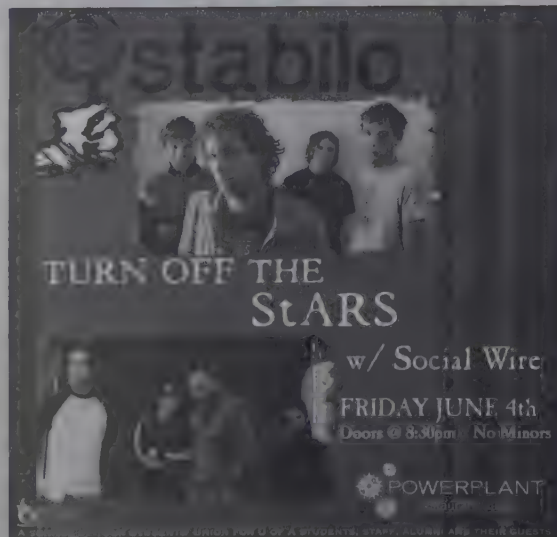
Young Heart Attack says their album should get you "pumped up," and there is certainly enough adrenaline injected into these 10 tracks to get you partying hard. While the music doesn't delve into the "nudge-nudge wink-wink" territory of the Darkness, it should appeal to beer-guzzlers and hard rock fans alike. ★★★★★ —CHAD HUCULAK

THE WILDHEARTS
THE WILDHEARTS MUST BE DESTROYED
(GUT)

Just because the Wildhearts must be destroyed, that doesn't mean they can be. But this eternally uncool-'til-it's-cool U.K. splatter-rock band's longevity may be more of a curse than a blessing; they're currently at the bottom of a slow spiral into mediocrity that has led to an album whose packaging is far better than the poppy anthem-rock inside it.

The graphic designers at Small Japanese Soldier did a great job on this CD—especially the movie poster-like cover. But Ginger and his crew of rockers fail to live up to it. Even their fiercely loyal fans will have to admit that songs like "Vanilla Radio" and "So Into You" sound more like a set of quickly recorded and cheaply assembled B-sides.

Maybe the record company hoped the Wildhearts could ride the Darkness' cock rock coattails to a little more American success. But it'll take more than Justin Hawkins's high-pitched yowl to save this lackluster release. ★ —JAMES ELFORD



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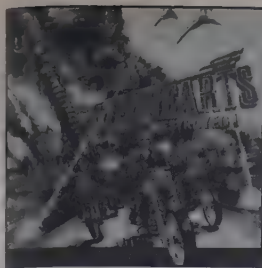
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07. it's all around you tortoise
08. misery is a butterfly blonde redhead
09. rejoicing in the hands devendra banhart
10. palm fronds the double



POWDERFINGER
VULTURE STREET
(UNIVERSAL)

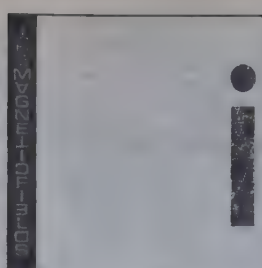
In their native Australia, Powderfinger are regarded in the same hallowed tones that Canadians reserve for the Tragically Hip. They deliver an appealing brand of meat-and-potatoes rock 'n' roll that punches all the right buttons, gets crowds riled up while still injecting a mild, off-kilter artiness into the heart of it all. With *Vulture Street*, Powderfinger might be able to use that formula to accomplish the goal that has thus far eluded our precious Hip: international fame. The album is a great big love-in with the roots of modern rock, offering a decent package of tunes to a pretty broad audience without insulting anyone's tastes—unless you're into crusty hardcore death punk or something. It's not hard to see where Powderfinger's coming from, though, when you hear songs like "Rockin' Rocks" and



"Roll Right By You." Yup. Sometimes a blunt object is the best tool to get the job done. ★★—DAVE JOHNSTON

THE MAGNETIC FIELDS
I
(NONESUCH)

"Why would I stop loving you/A hundred years from now/It's only time," croons Stephin Merritt on "It's Only Time," the final track on the Magnetic Fields' new album *I*, and the only thing more poignant than the song's achingly tender lyrics is the sound of Merritt's sad-sack voice audibly straining to hit the high notes on the words "now" and "only." Merritt brings such effortless skill, such a potent blend of wry humour and pure-hearted romance to his songwriting ("So you're brilliant, gorgeous and/Ampersand after ampersand," goes one delightful couplet from "I Don't Believe You") that it's almost intimidating. But Merritt's almost comically limit-



ed voice humanizes him beautifully, and makes the pessimistic reversals his songs always seem to take in the final verse seem completely believable.

As the follow-up to 69 *Love Songs*, the three-disc epic that might just be the best pop album of the last 10 years, *I* can't help but seem like a skimpy achievement by comparison. (And the album's gimmick—14 songs whose titles all begin with the letter "I," presented in alphabetical order—makes the disc seem more mechanical than it actually is.) But in fact, *I* features one jewel-like song after another: "I Looked All Over Town" and "If There's Such a Thing as Love" display a sense of structure and a level of sheer songwriting craft that you almost never see in pop music anymore. Songs like "I Wish I Had an Evil Twin" or "I Thought You Were My Boyfriend" are both funny and sad, sophisticated and simple, caustic and tender. Never has an "I-I-I" attitude been this appealing. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

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QUICK SPINS

BY WHITEY AND TB PLAYER

Mirah
C'mon Miracle
(K)

Top notch lo-fi, mid-fi and shi-fi summery lady pop. Sounds a wee bit like Sheryl Crow, but with enough sonic cookery to make pop deconstructionists and Sheryl Crow haters alike raise a wine cooler.

Out of Your Mouth
Draghdad
(Vik)

Eyeliner metal redeemed by a keen sense of humour. Releasing an eye-rolling rock version of Madonna's "Music" as the first single, however, is harder to justify.

Afroman
Afrohollic
(Hungry Hustler)

"Are you that corporate ass-kissin', white-music-playin', pencil-neck-geek-obeyin' nobody that's always talkin' about somebody? Yup, you probably are!" What Afroman lacks in flow and tunefulness he makes up for in laugh-out-loud lyrical dyn-o-mite. Two discs of that same novelty rap synth bassline gets a little tiring, though.

Eluvium
An Accidental Memory in the Case of Death
(Temporary Residence)

A quaint solo piano record that smacks of classical minimalist Steve Reich, Eluvium tickles the ivories and our fancy. Ahhh... Eluvium, the oldest joke in Eluvium's press pack! God bless you, good sir!

Various Artists
Modern Day Troubadours
(Nettwerk)

Just in case you were wondering who's on the cutting edge of the folksy singer/songwriter scene these days, the answer apparently is... Bob Dylan? Johnny Cash? Daniel Lanois? I guess the times they aren't a-changin' down at Nettwerk.

The Pixies
Best of the Pixies: Wave of Mutilation
(4AD)

If you were able to catch them on their recent "Where Are My Feet" tour, you can attest to the enduring appeal of the Pixies' canon. If you weren't, this best-of collection and accompanying DVD will give you a healthy amount of material for your buck and also pull together some often overlooked B-side gems.

Icy Demons
Fight Back!
(Cloud)

Some bleepy-bloopy knob-twiddling, a couple of long freakout jams, a little *Trout Mask Replica* and a whole lotta dope-ah. It's not bad, but someone should tell these people that not every single sound they can make is record-worthy. Edit! Edit!

Sam Phillips
A Boot and a Shoe
(Nonesuch)

Holt fucking shit, this is goddamn beautiful. Raw, stripped-down and honest. And if there's anything sexier than a woman singing in that husky, come-hither voice, I ain't heard it.

Lionel Richie
Just for You
(Island)

As we put this disc in, we say a little prayer: "Please, more 'Brick House,' less 'Dancing on the Ceiling.'" Surprisingly, the first song sounds a lot like U2. After that, though, Lionel braves the traffic by hanging out in the middle of the road for the entire album. Even an appearance by Lenny Kravitz can't liven things up. File under Christmas presents for Mom.

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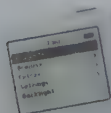
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classical
notes

By ALLISON KYDD

I behold every little star

Something in me resists the star system and especially its focus on youth, but when soloists combine musical proficiency and inventiveness with youthful energy and personal charm, even I am unable to resist. By any definition, the last few weeks in classical music have been star-studded. I suspect both presenters and audiences prefer to hear what's coming up rather than what's already happened, yet exceptional performances shouldn't be forgotten too soon, especially as the artists in question may be rising stars who will soon be out of reach. We must be on the alert for opportunities to hear and see them again.

One such star is Canadian violinist Jasper Wood, who played with the Canadian Chamber Orchestra two weeks ago—April 29 was also his birthday. The audience was depressingly small, but that made the quality of the performance even more remarkable. Wood played to the audience of a few hundred as if it were another Carnegie Hall gig. Born in Moncton, New Brunswick, he gave his first public performance at the age of five, has won numerous competitions in Canada, the United States and Italy, recorded several CDs and music videos and performed with many different chamber groups. Wood is known for his control as well as his "gorgeous sound and brilliant colour," and all were in evidence. And, yes, he has dimples.

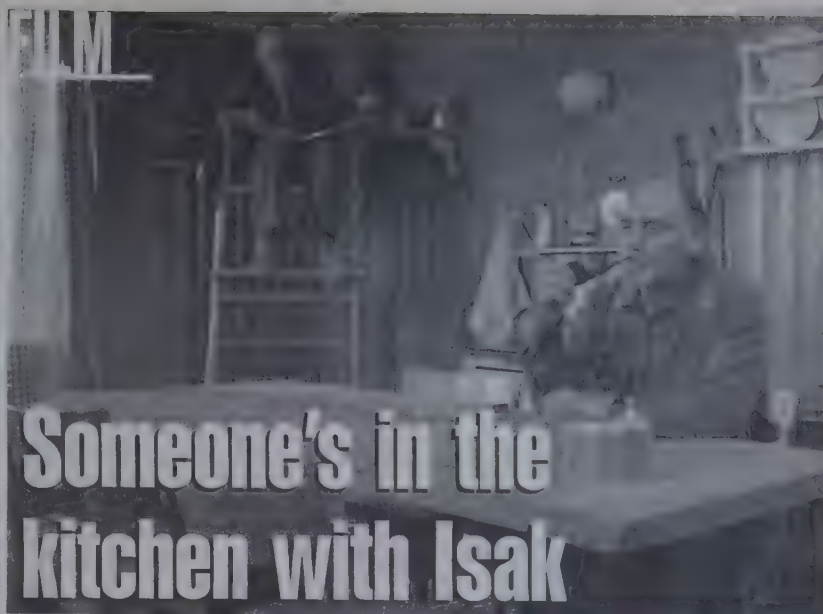
Neither was Wood the only star in the recent concert. Edmonton Agopian of Calgary served brilliantly as both principal violin and conductor. Though Maestro Grzegorz Nowak was missed—he had

been conscripted on short notice to conduct a gala concert celebrating Poland's entry into the European Union—the lack of a conductor also meant all the players took more responsibility. Agopian, who conducts the Calgary Youth Orchestra and the University of Calgary Orchestra, blithely said, "We play without a conductor all the time," but it takes a good deal of focus on the part of all the musicians for that to be possible. This little orchestra that sometimes looks ad hoc but sounds better all the time is getting a reputation for being "the little engine that could." I'm interested to see what becomes of them next year.

Pianist Ian Parker, who appeared at Muttart Hall last Thursday to mark the end of this year's Kiwanis Music Festival, also has star quality. Part of a famous Vancouver classical music family (he's the son of well-known music teachers and the cousin of pianist and Carnegie Hall regular Jon Kimura Parker), this 26-year-old's career is already on the ascent. In 2001, he won first prize at the CBC National Radio Competition, as well as grand prize at several other festivals and competitions. While studying at Juilliard, he received the Sylva Gelber Career Grant from the "Cartada" Council for the Arts, who presents the award annually to "the most talented Canadian artist." Coincidentally, Jasper Wood has also received this award.

Besides presenting a lively and dramatic program of primarily Romantic works (lots of brilliant Chopin and Liszt), Parker was his own compère, and a poised and graceful one at that. It was like having a concert and master class in one. The intergenerational audience responded with the enthusiasm one might expect, coaxing out a Chopin scherzo as an encore and laughing with delight when Parker pretended to collapse on the keyboard at the end.

Who's coming up? Will the next international star be Joey Mo, winner of the senior piano category in this year's Northern Alberta Concerto Competition and a student of Henry Mokken? Mo plays the Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Edmonton Youth Orchestra on Sunday, May 16. ●

Someone's in the
kitchen with IsakA bizarre
Scandinavian
sociological study
goes awry in
Kitchen Stories

By CHRIS BOUTET

You know, World War II has gotten a lot of bad press over the years, what with all the Nazis, ethnic cleansing and millions of deaths suffered by dozens of countries and what-have-you—so much so, in fact, that it's easy to forget the one positive thing it brought to modern European society: the efficiency of the wartime factory. In the years following the end of the war, however, this efficiency was not lost on the Swedish Home Research Institute (HRI), which conducted a series of studies in the early 1950s with the lofty, philanthropic goal of increasing the culinary productivity of Scandinavian housewives.

The HRI monitored and charted the movement patterns of housewives as they carried on their daily routines in the kitchen; the data was then used to create an ideal kitchen work-station layout that would most closely mimic the assembly line of a factory, thereby saving a household time and, by extension, money. Ads for the kitchen studies project touted that instead of a housewife having to walk the equivalent of Sweden to the Congo during a year of cooking, she would now only need to walk to northern Italy in order to provide food for the family. Science, as they say, triumphs again.

The reality of the project stops here, but in Swedish director Bent Hamer's world, the HRI, unsatisfied with having thoroughly mapped the behaviour of the Swedish housewife, then set its sights beyond the female world and extended their study to the rural community of Landstad,

Norway, where observers were stationed to track the habits of 18 single men. This is where *Kitchen Stories* begins, and what follows is a beautifully minimalist, touching and funny film about the dehumanizing nature of science.

Kitchen Stories opens up with a newsreel commentary lauding the success of HRI's housewife project against shots of aproned women, sporting ridiculously huge breatheath monitors, cooking and cleaning a laboratory kitchen while scientists look on, nodding and taking notes. It's a



scene that is absurd to the point of surreality, but it perfectly sets the tone for the rest of the film, forcing the viewer to suspend their disbelief and accept that such coldly scientific methods were once thought to be the height of progress. Which is good, as the bachelor study involves even stranger methodology: observers will set up shop in the field, perched atop a ridiculous tennis-umpire chair in the corner of their subject's kitchen, and from that vantage point they will track the every move of their host.

THE STORY CONCERNS ITSELF predominantly with the case study of Isak (Joachim Calmeyer), a reserved, private old farmer who volunteers to be observed by Folke (Tomas Norström). Isak has been promised a horse in return for his participation, but when Isak learns upon Folke's arrival that the horse is, in fact, just a wooden toy, their professional relationship is immediately soured. What follows is a long period of painfully awkward silence as Folke sits imposingly in the corner, under orders never to converse or fraternize with the subject in any way, while Isak sits at his kitchen table, silently sipping coffee or eating chocolates. The project appears to be going nowhere, but soon the wall between

the two begins to break down, and as other observers and test subjects also begin to grow closer, the HRI becomes concerned that the scientific method has been spoiled and the project is doomed to failure.

In the skillful directorial hands of Hamer (*Eggs*), the film's theme of the search for human connection in a world dominated by the cold hand of science comes wonderfully to life. Wide shots of rural Norway's frozen, empty expanses stand in juxtaposition against the warm, almost claustrophobic backdrop of Isak's kitchen, made even smaller by the presence of Folke's towering chair. As Isak and Folke become friends, Folke realizes that his institute's attempts to understand humanity by quantifying and measuring it is a fruitless endeavour; rather, people can only truly understand one another through communication, a method that the positivistic heads of the institute feel only ruins the scientific process. Isak and Folke's gradual friendship is a celebration of the human experience, and it's presented in such a funny, endearing and tragic manner that one can't help but be caught up in the muted rush of emotion that ensues.

While some of the film's comedy will undoubtedly be lost on those of us (like me) who aren't too familiar with the Swedish/Norwegian rivalry which seems to dominate films from that part of the world, this is a minor complaint, and one that is more than made up for by beautiful cinematography, a captivating story and superb acting. In this reviewer's humble opinion, *Kitchen Stories* is one of the best films to hit Edmonton cinemas thus far this year. ●

KITCHEN STORIES

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Director
Nathaniel Kahn

Edifice complex

Nathaniel Kahn goes on a five-year quest to understand his legendary father in *My Architect*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

"Closure is wildly overrated," says filmmaker Nathaniel Kahn. "We Americans are very fixated on this idea of 'closure,' but while it's a nice idea, I think you have to learn to live with ambiguity. The Greeks will tell you, Shakespeare will tell you: there is such a thing as an open ending, and one must learn to deal with things that are unresolved and unresolvable."

That's one of the big lessons Kahn learned while making his absorbing, Oscar-nominated documentary *My Architect*. The project began as Kahn's attempt, for the first time in his life, to get to know his late father, Louis I. Kahn, the visionary architect whose buildings include the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California, the Yale Center for British Art and Exeter Library in Exeter, New Hampshire. Kahn's timeless buildings, with their masterful use of light and majestic deployment of simple geometric shapes, had a serene, spiritual quality that even a layperson can appreciate, but Kahn was unable to bring the same order to his personal life. When he died in 1974, his obituary in the *New York Times* said he was survived by his wife Esther and his daughter Sue Ann, but in fact Kahn had two other "unofficial" families as well: he had a second daughter, Alexandra, with a colleague named Anne Tyng before striking up another extramarital relationship with Harriet Pattison, a landscape archi-

tect, and fathering Nathaniel.

"Lou was not an approachable guy," recalls Nathaniel, who only knew Louis through his unpredictable weekend visits to the Pattison house. (He was 12 when his father died.) "I certainly didn't think of him as a 'dad'—a dad was someone who fell asleep on the sofa with a newspaper over his face, and that was not my father. In a way, I thought of my father as superior to those other dads. Of course, I later came to find that many of those dads were superior to him in many very fundamental ways.... They learned to balance their lives in ways that my father never did."

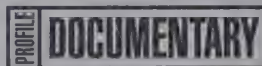
My Architect follows the adult Nathaniel as he interviews Louis's colleagues and peers, quizzes family members and travels across the country and overseas to visit his father's remarkable buildings. (He even takes a trip on a delightful floating concert hall that shows his father at his most whimsical.) The film ends with Nathaniel paying an emotional visit to his father's masterwork: the utterly astonishing capitol building in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Completed more than 10 years after Louis's death, the building is so heartstoppingly, profoundly beautiful that the idea of understanding the mind of the man who conceived it suddenly seems ridiculous. "I started out wondering what place my mother and I really had in his life," Nathaniel says. "And I think my discovery was that his life was much more complex, much more rich and varied than I had ever thought."

I spoke last weekend with Nathaniel Kahn from his office in Philadelphia. Here are some of the highlights of our conversation.

Vue Weekly: When you first conceived of this project, what seemed more daunting: the logistics of travelling all over the world, visiting all

these buildings and tracking down all these colleagues of your father, or the prospect of digging up all this very emotional, personal stuff from your past?

Nathaniel Kahn: To some degree, neither of those things. I'd made films before, so the logistics weren't that daunting, and I don't



think I was aware when I started of how difficult the personal aspects of the film would be. I think the main concern I had at the beginning was just finding the money for a project like this, which was extremely difficult and took me a tremendous amount of time. If you think about it, it's a wildly inefficient and expensive way to express yourself. [Laughs.] And my other concern was a structural one: not how I would gather the material, but how I would put it together. I knew from the beginning, though, that I wanted to compose the film out of scenes and not interviews. It's not a talking heads structure; instead, we'd meet someone once, we'd have an encounter, something would happen, we'd move on. I wanted to keep that structure because that's the way a journey actually happens; people don't just suddenly pop back up off the screen. That's an artificial reality that I think works against the emotional and narrative drive of the story.

VW: How familiar were you with your father's buildings before making the film? Had you visited a lot of them before?

NK: No, I really hadn't seen that many of them, and even then I really hadn't understood them or explored them the way I had to when I filmed them. When you experience them that way, you're really forced to slow down and think

about what they are and how they work and what they make you feel. My first real spiritual experiences with buildings were certainly not with my father's buildings; they were in cathedrals in Europe. You go to a place like Chartres Cathedral and you can't help but feel an enormous spiritual presence. It's not specifically religious; it's just spiritual. There's something about the way the buildings were built, the materials that were used, that evokes something spiritual, and I think Louis Kahn was after that in his buildings.

VW: So much of the film is about your own search for an emotional connection with your father, but it seems as though all the emotional connections he made with people were through his buildings. Robert Boudreau, who operates that musical boat, starts to cry when he realizes you're Louis's son; Shamsul Wares, who you meet in Bangladesh, gets very emotional as he talks about the capitol and you've described yourself welling up with tears upon first seeing that building.

NK: Well, that achievement really makes you understand why he made the sacrifices he made. You can't help but realize, "My God, what an achievement, in this difficult place—what an amazing thing to have done."

VW: What would you have liked to have shown of that building if you've had more than the 10 minutes of screen time you had room for? What would you have had to do in order to do that achievement justice?

NK: Well, I think, ultimately, the best thing I could do for the building is to make people curious enough about it to see it in person. You really cannot capture it. It's the kind of place—you just wouldn't believe it. I mean, you've gotta go. It will not disappoint you! It's so stunning. It's not just about being big; it's about being spiritual and being at the end of a long journey. I mean, it's *hard* to get to—you don't just walk out your front door and hop on a plane and arrive there. It's a journey.

VW: Part of what's so moving about the film is the way your father's career was marked by so many disappointments—so many projects that he wasn't able to real-

ize, this office that lost money on every building he made. Is that typical of architects, or was that part of your father's stubborn nature?

NK: No, I think most architects will tell you that a lot of their projects don't get finished. But what I found so remarkable about Lou's work was his ability to just move on. That's a wonderful quality to have—Frank Lloyd Wright refused to have a rear-view mirror in his car because he said, "I'm not interested in where I've been, only where I'm going." Lou took that one step further: he didn't even drive. I think that's a quality that's related to filmmaking; there's so many things that transpire to make something you're doing less than what you've hoped. There's not enough money, people have attitudes, people lose interest, others lose heart—all those things are very similar to architecture.

VW: Do you recognize your father in yourself now in ways that you didn't before?

NK: Oh, sure. There's many aspects of my father that I'm proud to imitate: his optimism, his ability to work with limitations in a way that made his work not less but more. The ability to bide one's time, to trust in oneself, to stick to something without ever giving up.

VW: This may be a touchy subject, but there's an episode of *Law and Order: Criminal Intent* that was obviously inspired by your father's story—a murder mystery about a world-famous architect with two secret families—and I was curious to find out your reaction to seeing your story dramatized that way.

NK: Oh, well, it was such a shallow reading of the story and they so completely missed what it was really all about that it didn't worry me in the slightest. I think that if you're looking for the sensational aspects of the story, they're certainly there, but that's the least of it. *My Architect* tries to say something universal about the human experience, whereas I think most people have already forgotten about *Law and Order*. ●

MY ARCHITECT

Written and directed by Nathaniel Kahn
• Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Wed,
May 14-19 (7pm) • Metro Cinema •
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Nathaniel and Louis I. Kahn



Van Helsing director Stephen Sommers deserves a stake through his heart

By **DARREN ZENKO**

Even if you're not a horror geek, movie nerd, misty-eyed film buff or dedicated Goth-type who spends weekend nights satin-caping it around town pretending to be a vampire, you want a movie like *Van Helsing* to be good. You may not even realize it, but you do. I mean, come on... Dracula, Wolfman and Frankenstein, all in one film, blockbusterized for the new millennium? Even if you don't really give a shit about purism (and really, who worth listening to *does*?) these characters are part of our culture, archetypes in the Cosmic Unconsciousness; play with them, utilize them, satirize them—I've got nothing against Count Chocula, for example, and am of the opinion that the late Phil Hartman gave us one of the all-time-great Frankenstein's Monsters—but for the love of all that's unholy, you oughta not piss all over them. Too bad for us, then, that writer/director Stephen "The Mummy" Sommers has a ham-

ster's bladder, Universal has no indoor plumbing and all these monsters just happened to be handy.

First the good news, for all of you who want nothing more than an Action-Packed Summer Blockbuster Computer-Generated Special Effects Non-Stop THX Adventure Thrill Ride: *Van Helsing*'s your film. From the prologue battle between Hugh Jackman's title character and villainous monkey-man Mr. Hyde, through something like 50 battles against the harpy-like Brides of Dracula and pyrotechnical showdowns in Castles Dracula and Frankenstein, scraps with slavering werewolves, ballroom blitzes, more rope-and-cable swinging than you'll

REVUE HORROR

probably see in *Spider-Man 2*, and a forest chase scene with horsedrawn carriages pulling moves out of *The Dukes of Hazzard* and exploding like tanker trucks, Sommers seldom if ever takes his foot off *Van Helsing*'s gas pedal. For over two hours, the movie shrieks and roars and howls and yammers and shouts at top volume while computer graphics swirl and loop and do all kinds of crazy shit—and in the odd moments when nothing's screaming or exploding, the sound-

track steps up the aural assault.

WHY ALL THE NOISE? My unkind theory is that the more ear-shattering the sound, the less likely it will be that people who Paid Good Money to See This Shit will overhear their fellow moviegoers laughing derisively. Because, man, *Van Helsing* is laughable. Sommers seems to have gone out of his way to make sure that no trace of real humour, genuine wit or authentic character development would overshadow his special-effects wank-off. Thudding dialogue with all the energy of an interoffice memo on bathroom-tissue policy pops out of the mouths of his characters and just sort of sits there until, having no clue what to do with a non-battle scene, Sommers kicks the action up again before (he hopes, in vain) the audience clues in and gets bored.

Van Helsing, the character, doesn't exist: the thing we see onscreen is a name, a hat, a coat and a bunch of semi-cool weaponry. Jackman is an okay actor, but there's no character here for him to act around—and he's no Johnny Depp who can take an empty shell of a character and drape tics and flourishes all over it until an Oscar nomination arrives.

So much for the monster-hunter; what about the monsters? Well,

Richard Roxburgh is probably the shittiest Dracula ever, so that's a start. He kind of reminded me of Gary Oldman. Not Oldman's Dracula, mind you, but Oldman's fidgety evil business guy Zorg in *The Fifth Element*, sort of spazzy and delusional, easily frustrated and one setback away from losing his shit entirely. A fun character, I guess, but not exactly the Lord of Night, Black Prince of the Undead. Frankenstein's a nice piece of production design, but doesn't really have much to do other than mope and strain mightily against his bonds—though, like every other character in the film, he *does* get a chance to swing from a cable like Tarzan. The werewolf is pretty much what you'd expect: a very expensive-looking special effect.

AND HOW DO THEY all tie together? Well, you see, Dracula sensed he was losing his power because teenagers weren't afraid of him anymore, so he sent his dream-self to Crystal Lake, where Frankenstein... Oh, wait; no, that was *Freddy vs. Jason*. *Van Helsing*'s premise is much, much stupider, and

involves a cathedral full of vampire eggs [What the fuck?!—the reader] and an army of Jaws.

Incredibly loud, spastically action-packed, dumb as can be, and conscious of its heritage only as far as necessary to make a few slack-jawed "homages," *Van Helsing* is also empty as a Transylvanian tomb. Ten minutes after I left the theatre, I could feel my memories of this disposable monstrosity tumbling out of my ears. This guy Sommers, he's a vandal and a fraud. He cut his teeth chewing up and spitting out the Mummy over the course of two bad films, and now he's pulled off a desecration hat trick. I shouldn't take it so personally, I guess, but the outcry must be heard! Sommers is on a roll through the who's who of Monsterland and *somebody* has to stop him—it's only a matter of time before this hack ruins *Blacula*. ☹

VAN HELSING

Written and directed by Stephen Sommers
• Starring Hugh Jackman, Kate Beckinsale, Richard Roxburgh and constant ear-splitting shrieks and howls • Now playing

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Perfect attendants

The Delicate Art of Parking ranks somewhere in the middle on the laugh meter

By JOSEF BRAUN

Zeroing in on the modern city's most banal object of scorn and fury, Trent Carlson's *The Delicate Art of Parking* is a faux documentary that, in the comedic spirit of taking silly things seriously, ushers the viewer into the hidden world of Vancouver's marginalized and martyred parking attendants. If you're not above watching *Cops* or involuntarily leaping out off your chair for a hockey fight, the chance to watch parking attendants getting repeatedly screamed at or physically assaulted by the general public (as promised in the film's trailer) will no doubt appeal to you. But wisely—since the gags, pathos and violence can't possibly sustain itself for feature length (or even the first 15 minutes)—Carl-

son and co-screenwriter Blake Corbet have cooked up a mystery subplot to give *The Delicate Art of Parking* some shape and intrigue. The end result is patchy and occasionally coasts on the quirky mock-doc conventions developed by Christopher Guest in *Waiting for Guffman*, *Best in Show* and *A Mighty Wind*, but some of the highlights are pretty memorable and endearingly Canadian.

The film's protagonist is documentary filmmaker Lonnie (Dov Tiefenbach of *Flower and Garnet* and *Get Over It*), a disgruntled "multiple offender" with three grand in outstanding parking tickets who begins his investigation into parking attendant culture out of sheer spite. His main question: how these people can



go to work every morning knowing that they're harbingers of misery and debt, hated figures clothed in uniforms and stripped of sympathy who

REVUE COMEDY

do nothing but piss people off all day long. The irony is that Lonnie, who repeatedly manipulates his subjects in order to sex up his movie, is actu-

ally less likable and more exploitative of human folly than the meter people he despises. (And there's something pretty satisfying about watching Lonnie be so self-serving with his handling of others' misery in the wake of some of the cringe-inducing moments of *Bowling for Columbine*—the ones where Michael Moore's camera lingers superfluously upon him giving hugs to people in pain.)

AT FIRST all Lonnie's biggest discovery is Grant (Fred Ewanick), a lonely, supremely anal-retentive nerd of an attendant who believes in the higher purpose of parking control so religiously that he's more than willing to proselytize and inadvertently embarrass himself before Lonnie and his crew of two. But quickly—and rather conveniently—Lonnie licks out when the making of his movie coincides with the sudden, controversial running down of parking attendant and self-styled guru Murray, a 41-year-old who lives with his mother, has parking meters for bedposts and has developed a Buddhism-inspired theory of offender anger dissipation that Grant believes will revolutionize the industry and increase attendant safety. Details of Murray's attack become confused, a conspiracy seems afoot and Lonnie and his new friends must

come to terms with their mixed feelings about their opposing positions on parking enforcement if they are to uncover the truth.

The Delicate Art of Parking desperately needs its narrative framework to hold it together, but the film's best moments still arise from incidentals and goofy details. The scene where Lonnie and crew get into the Intersection, an exclusive parking attendant nightclub, doesn't have the charm or payoff you might hope for, but there are some pleasures to be had in Grant's anger management training sessions with his mostly very tense colleagues. Ewanick carries the film with his dutiful, sweet conviction and avoidance of cheap laughs, but the film's single most appealing performance is probably delivered by Tony Conte as Jerome, an extremely good-natured transplanted Quebecker who drives a tow truck, falls for Lonnie's Russian soundperson and is willing to do anything to help his pals. His smile consumes his big face so fully that it's difficult to avoid going along with him. ●

THE DELICATE ART OF PARKING
Directed by Trent Carlson • Written by Trent Carlson and Blake Corbet • Starring Dov Tiefenbach and Fred Ewanick • Opens Fri, May 14

The trouble with triples

3 Women, Robert Altman's most elusive masterpiece, makes its DVD debut

By JOSEF BRAUN

Sometime in 1977, while his wife was frighteningly ill and in hospital, Robert Altman went home to get some much-needed sleep and literally dreamed of his next movie: all he knew was that it would be set in a desert, have something to do with identity theft, star Shelley Duvall and Sissy Spacek, and be called *3 Women*. Those were the days before Altman's commercial cred was lost, *M*A*S*H* and *Nashville* were still fresh victories, and all Altman had to do was stop by the 20th Century Fox studios on his way to the airport, throw his skeleton of a pitch at Alan Ladd Jr. and walk out a few minutes later with a picture deal. He didn't even miss his flight.

3 Women, now available on DVD from the Criterion Collection, is an enigmatic jewel from that magic period of creative freedom for Altman. His dream infused the film not only with the raw materials of cast, theme and setting, but with a strange atmosphere of aquatic veils, exaggerated colours, steam, reflections, shadows and rising heat. Yet it also delved into a small, isolated pocket of the U.S. swathed with a loneliness, superficiality and frailty amidst dusty, kitschy bits of Americana like minigolf courses, shooting ranges and dirtbikes. It's perplexing as all hell, and I'm not certain it ever quite comes full circle in the way it strives for, but it makes as lasting an impres-

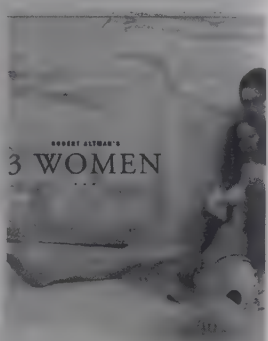
sion as anything Altman's ever done.

The first moments are transporting: a woman painting a mural is seen through a tumbling aquarium. As Gerald Busby's atonal score heightens the slightly alien aura, the images dissolve to an indoor pool in which elephantine legs intermingling with aged torsos walking and wading. The pool is a spa for the elderly and infirm, a place where young women gently guide patients through simple exercises. The spa's model employee is Millie (Duvall), an oddly beautiful and utterly by-the-book young woman possessing a certain women's-magazine glamour. We meet Millie as she trains Pinky (Spacek), an eager, almost child-like new employee. "You're a little like

REVUE DVD

me, aren't you?" Millie asks Pinky at one point, and Pinky takes the comment to heart. What develops between these two women is hard to put your finger on, but it's as though Pinky, whose own personality as a bit of blank slate, latches onto Millie as a role model, a form of hero worship that develops into something at once profound and sinister.

FOR ALL ITS EMPHASIS on ambiguity and atmosphere, performances are crucial to *3 Women*. Duvall is beguiling and pathetic as Millie—the magic of her performance is partially attributable to the fact that she practically invented her character, writing not just the diaries we hear her read, but all the shopping lists and recipes as well. (Duvall even bought the groceries to make Millie's ridiculous cheese-spray hors d'oeuvres.) And Spacek transforms seamlessly amid



the metaphysical and narrative leaps of the film's second half, going from child to temperamental seductress and back to child again. As well, both actresses are funny, wearing their characters' abundant eccentricities as though they were totally normal.

3 Women owes something to Ingmar Bergman's *Persona*, but it lives in its own separate world with its own psychic implications. Everything in *3 Women* conspires to some larger, unspoken event: the Bodhi Wind murals of sexual monsters painted in empty swimming pools by Willie (Janice Rule), the third woman of the title; the snobbish twins at the spa who seem content to communicate only with each other; the appearance of an elderly couple who may or may not be Pinky's parents but who haunt Millie with their otherness (and their repellent, aged appearance). What does it all mean? The good news is that Altman's commentary is often illuminating without ever trying to supply a solution. That task is up to us. ●

3 WOMEN
Written and directed by Robert Altman • Starring Shelley Duvall, Sissy Spacek and Janice Rule • Now on DVD

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Doppelgänger of New York

The Olsen twins
wreak havoc on
the Big Apple
(and our critic) in
New York Minute

By CHRIS BOUTET

Perhaps once or twice in everyone's life, there comes a time when you have to take one for the team, to commit a selfless act that will benefit your friends, your family, or society as a whole. Maybe you'll take a bullet in the gut to save the prime minister's life; maybe you'll throw yourself on top of a grenade to make sure that Brooklyn Joe will get back home and marry his high-school sweetheart; maybe you'll have to eat that entire rancid ham in the back of the fridge so that your roommates don't get sick and die. My own moment came last night when I sat in a theatre and unselfishly martyred my sensibilities by watching the Olsen twins' latest film, *New York Minute*—in its entirety, from opening credits to closing credits—just so you won't ever have to do the same. In a way, I kind of felt like Jesus, except I was sitting down instead of hanging from a cross. And instead of eating nothing, I was eating popcorn. Also, I'm not the son of God.

Now, those who know me know that I'm pretty far from being a "tween"; as a 27-year-old male with a university education, I sincerely doubt that I could be counted amongst the demographic this film is



heresy!

Every week, *Vue* invites its film writers to champion a film that everyone else dismisses as trash, or to slam a film that everyone else regards as art. This week: **Chris Wiegler** pans **The Big Lebowski**.

As I see it, this sacred cow is ready for the killing floor. I will apologize in advance, since I realize how many coolsters out there worship this movie and its impotent worldview. Metro Cinema, for instance, brought *Lebowski* back for a brief run last summer, helping to confirm its cult status, which has grown like mold since it was released in 1998.

In fact, the film's appeal now extends even beyond the silver screen. According to this month's *Spin*, a series of "Lebowski Fests" now occur in places like Louisville and Las Vegas. The devotees gather to bowl, drink White Russians and blurt out their favourite lines ("The Dude abides," etc.) during

geared towards. But at the same time, I don't care. This film blows to its fullest blowtential, so much so that I doubt even the screechy 10-year-old girls who spent more time running up and down the aisles than sitting next to me found something to hold onto. And really, failing to satiate the entertainment needs of an age group to whom ponies, ice cream and Hilary Duff are the height of sophistication is a feat that no amount of unrestrained hyperbole could sufficiently communicate.

REVUE COMEDY

But perhaps I'm being too harsh, you say. I mean, after all, this *Is* just an Olsen twins film, right? We know they suck. Ah, quite true, my segue-assisting friends, but up until now, with the exception of 1995's *It Takes Two*, the Olsens have quietly and unobtrusively sucked their lives away in the bargain bin at Blockbuster. The very fact that this film made it to theaters rather than going straight to video like those before it suggests the Mary-Kate and Ashley actually felt that this film was going to be their big break, their entry point into the mainstream of cinema. If only they had known how wrong they were.

DIRECTED by Dennie Gordon (*What a Girl Wants*, *Joe Dirt*) and starring a scad of B-list comedic actors who should have known better, the film tells the rather pedestrian story of two sisters from different walks of life who get into all kinds of wacky adventures.

yet another screening. It's the kind of fanboy gushing that once prompted William Shatner to urge fans of a certain TV show to "get a life."

So what's the big deal? Search me. *The Big Lebowski* is an intentionally lethargic shaggy-dog affair, polluted with predictable scenes and stillborn jokes—a kind of literal Big Sleep, you'll excuse the allusion to the meandering Raymond Chandler-esque *noir* which is its most notable influence. The private dick here is the Dude (Jeff Bridges), an unemployed '60s burnout who comes up against a kidnapping plot, embezzlement, nihilists, porn stars and (inevitably) "the occasional acid flashback." Only there's not much to make the oddball scenes and character vignettes congeal. They're all crammed in like a hastily packed suitcase, lacking any message other than "Well, hey, that's L.A. for you, man!" Compared to *Raising Arizona*, the Coen brothers' screwball vision of the American Southwest, this is a roach with mostly tobacco.

I trace my own spite to the Tarantino influence. The stylized, rambling dialogue—"fucking this, fuck that"—seems very dated these days, as do the jagged transitions and splashes of desensitized violence. When the Dude's best friend, Vietnam vet Walter Sobchak (John Goodman), pulls a gun

As we join the mismatched pair, Jane Ryan (one of the Olsen twins) is a button-down Republican who is about to give a speech that will grant her a scholarship to go to Oxford (which is apparently in London now, according to the movie), while Roxy Ryan (the other Olsen twin) is a slovenly "punk" rocker who is cutting class so she can go to a Simple Plan video shoot and give her band's demo CD to some rock executives.

But things go awry for the two sisters as they are pursued by myriad pursuers, including Eugene Levy, a truant officer (they still have those, right?) who is looking to bag Roxy, and a promotion, and Andy Richter, a foot soldier for the Chinese mafia who is trying to recover a computer chip full of pirated music that Roxy is unwittingly in possession of. Mad-cap antics and, by extension, hilarity, allegedly ensue, all wrapped up in a package consisting of needlessly flashy editing, insulting racial stereotypes, cloying sentimentality and dreamy, non-threatening boys.

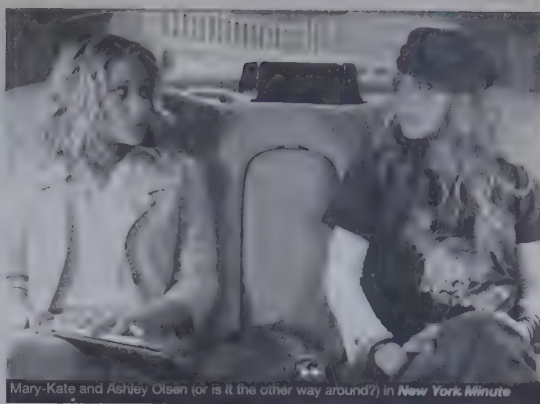
Levy should seriously consider never being in another movie again after his hammy, craptacular performance, but Richter should be *especially* ashamed of himself for his portrayal of a white guy raised by Chinese mafioso/laundromat-owners, complete with an incredibly inappropriate Asian accent that makes Jerry Lewis's Japanese busboy routine seem positively reeled-in. The twins, meanwhile—and I'm sure that this will come as a surprise—totally can't act. And as if that weren't enough, let's face it: they look like those little wild-

in a bowling alley or bites off the ear of an aggressive nihilist, I can't help but yawn or reach for the bong. Sadly, no dose of intoxicants can overcome the Tryptophan Effect of lazy, needlessly overfamiliar storytelling that ultimately goes nowhere.

Well, not quite nowhere. A cowpoke named the Stranger (Sam Elliott) bookends the film with some ridiculous voice-over. Like a librarian reading to schoolchildren, he recaps at the end in case we've missed the point: "Things seem to have worked out pretty well for the Dude and Walter. And it was a pretty good story, dontcha think?"

My Lord, does a film this directionless need an exegesis? That's like having a Talmudic scholar interpret a Howard Stern rant. Still, there's no disputing that audiences are more tolerant of this sort of postmodern meta-tripe, exemplified by arch-cheater Charlie Kaufman, than they were back in the day.

But I suppose the irony of *The Big Lebowski*, and arguably the true source of my displeasure, is that the Dude *does* abide. This film was set in the early '90s, during the first stages of Bush Sr.'s Gulf War. The Dude didn't care then and a lot of us don't care now. An apathetic bag of shit, like resin in the pipe from years ago, somehow remains. ●




Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen (or is it the other way around?) in *New York Minute*

haired troll dolls that bingo players love so much. How far can you go with that? Hopefully, the box office will determine that answer, and the Olsen twins will grudgingly return to the depths of the straight-to-video empire from whence they came. ●


NEW YORK MINUTE

Directed by Dennie Gordon • Written by
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

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FILM WEEKLY

NEW THIS WEEK

Asa Nu Maan Wetna Da (CO) Harbhajan Mann, Kurandeep Kimmi and Gurpreet Chuggi star in director Manmohan Singh's Bollywood musical about two young lovers, one raised in India, the other in Canada, and their struggle to overcome their cultural differences.

Breakin' All the Rules (CO) Jamie Foxx, Gabrielle Union, Morris Chestnut and Jennifer Esposito star in *Commandments* writer-director Daniel Taplitz's relationship comedy about a man who reinvents himself as a bestselling breakup expert after getting dumped by his girlfriend.

The Delicate Art of Parking (P) Dov Tiefenbach and Fred Ewanick star in director Trent Carlson's low-budget mockumentary about a scottish filmmaker who gets drawn into the bizarre subculture of parking enforcement while researching his latest documentary.

Hall the Conquering Hero (EFS) Eddie Bracken, Ella Raines and William Demarest star in *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* writer-director Preston Sturges's subversive 1944 satire about a timid military reject who returns home to a hero's welcome as a result of his self-aggrandizing letters to his family. *Provincial Museum Auditorium* (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, May 17 (8pm)

Kitchen Stories (M) Joachim Calmeyer, Tomas Norstrom and Bjorn Floberg star in director Bent Hamer's quirky comedy about a scientist who moves into the home of a middle-aged bachelor to observe his daily routine as part of a government-sponsored sociological study, and his vain attempts to keep his presence from influencing his subject's behaviour. In Norwegian with English subtitles. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel, Fri-Wed, May 14-19 (9pm)*

My Architect (M) Director Nathaniel Kahn's absorbing documentary about his globetrotting quest to understand his late father, the legendary architect Louis I. Kahn, by interviewing his former colleagues and visiting the remarkable buildings he was responsible for designing. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel, Fri-Wed, May 14-19 (7pm)*

Shrek 2 (CO, FP) The voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Antonio Banderas, Julie Andrews and John Cleese are featured in this sequel to the 2001 animated hit, in which grouchy ogre Shrek travels to the homeland of his new wife Fiona, where he gets a chilly reception from her parents and her former beau, Prince Charming. (Opens Wed, May 19)

Troy (CO, FP) Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Orlando Bloom, Sean Bean and Peter O'Toole star in *Dog Boot* director Wolfgang Petersen's epic retelling of the saga of the Trojan War, from

Paris's abduction of Helen of Troy to the Greeks' bloody, decade-long siege of the Troy stronghold.

The United States of Leland (P) Ryan Gosling, Don Cheadle, Jena Malone, Chris Klein and Kevin Spacey star in writer-director Matthew Ryan Hoge's pretentious ensemble drama about a prison counselor trying to understand why a seemingly ordinary high-school student killed his girlfriend's autistic brother.

Waterwalker Film Festival (M) A selection of short Canadian films about canoeing, kayaking and water conservation. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel, Thu, May 13 (7pm)*

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

The Corporation (GA) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.

Envy (CO, FP) Jack Black, Ben Stiller, Rachel Weisz and Amy Poehler star in *Wag the Dog* director Barry Levinson's critically savaged comedy about a pair of lifelong buddies whose friendship undergoes severe strain when one of them becomes incredibly wealthy as the inventor of a device that vapourizes dog feces.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman.

Godsend (CO) Greg Kinnear, Rebecca Romijn-Stamos, Robert De Niro and Cameron Diaz star in *The Hole* director Nick Hamm's scientifically questionable thriller about a couple who unwittingly hire a mysterious scientist to use an experimental cloning procedure to bring their son back to life.

Good Bye, Lenin! (CO) Daniel Brühl, Kathrin Sass and Maria Simon star in director Wolfgang Becker's satirical comedy about a young German man whose staunchly Communist mother awakens from a lengthy coma and, fearing that the shock of hearing the truth will kill her, goes to ridiculous lengths to keep her from finding out that the Iron Curtain has fallen. In German with English subtitles.

Hidalgo (CO) Viggo Mortensen, Malcolm McDowell and Omar Sharif star in *Honey, I*

Shrank the Kids director Joe Johnston's exotic equestrian epic, set in Saudi Arabia in 1890, about an American Pony Express courier who travels to the desert to take part in a lucrative but dangerous and grueling horse race.

Home on the Range (CO, FP) The voices of Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Judi Dench, Steve Buscemi and Jennifer Tilly are featured in this animated Disney cartoon about a group of animals who band together to raise enough money to pay off the mortgage on the farm where they all live.

I'm Not Scared (P) Giuseppe Cristiano, Mattia Di Pierro and Aitana Sanchez Gijon star in *Mediterraneo* director Gabriele Salvatores's involving thriller about a nine-year-old Sicilian boy who discovers another boy being held captive in a hole beneath an abandoned house. In Italian with English subtitles.

Kill Bill, Vol. 2 (CO, FP) Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Michael Madsen and Daryl Hannah star in the conclusion of writer-director Quentin Tarantino's genre-hopping exploitation epic, in which a former assassin relentlessly tracks down the man who employed her, impregnated her, shot her and left her for dead.

Love of Attraction (CO) Pierce Brosnan, Julianne Moore, Frances Fisher and Parker Posey star in *Sliding Doors* director Peter Howitt's romantic comedy about a husband-and-wife pair of divorce attorneys struggling to keep their own marriage together while terminating those of their clients.

Main Hoon Na (CO) Shahrukh Khan, Zayed Khan, Amrita Rao and Naseeruddin Shah star in director Farah Khan's Bollywood musical about a major who must pose as a university student in order to protect the life of an officer's daughter and to fulfill the dying wish of his martyred father. In Hindi.

Man on Fire (CO, FP) Denzel Washington, Dakota Fanning and Christopher Walken star in *Top Gun* director Tony Scott's glossy revenge flick about a former U.S. Marine who takes a job as a bodyguard for the daughter of a wealthy family in Mexico City that has been targeted by a gang of kidnappers.

Mean Girls (CO, FP) Lindsay Lohan, Lacey Chabert, Rachel McAdams and Tina Fey (who also wrote the script) star in *Mean Girls* director Mark S. Waters's anthropological teen comedy about a high school transfer student who finds herself at war with a ruthless clique of snobby popular girls.

NASCAR 3D: The IMAX Experience (FP) Kiefer Sutherland and Jeff Gordon are featured in *Free Willy* director Simon Wincer's jumbo-screen documentary about the history of the NASCAR racing circuit and the cutting-edge technology that the sport's top drivers rely on to win competitions.



Brad Pitt has many CAMs as Achilles in the new sword-and-sandal epic *Troy*, but why this guy is probably pretty enough to get away with playing Helen of Troy. (In fact, Helen is being played by Diane Kruger, a German model and former ballerina who until recently called herself Diane Heidegger, a name that she apparently figured was a little more fitting for her new career as a big-screen goddess.) Kruger's an unknown quantity as far as her acting skills go, but the rest of the cast is a formidable mix of *Lord of the Rings*-tested hunks (Sean Bean, Orlando Bloom) and classy Brits (Peter O'Toole, Brendan Gleeson, Julie Christie, Brian Cox). And the Hulk guy (Eric Bana)? Hey, did you know that Pitt actually injured his Achilles tendon during filming? Ah! I can say it, it's lucky the same thing didn't happen to Burt Reynolds when he was making *Stroker Ace*.

New York Minute (CO, FP) Mary-Kate Olsen, Ashley Olsen and Eugene Levy star in *What a Girl Wants* director Dennie Gordon's teen comedy about two twin sisters—one a scholarly "good girl," the other a rebellious "punk rocker"—who have a full day of misadventures when they sneak off together to New York City.

The Punisher (CO, FP) Thomas Jane and John Travolta star in writer-director Jonathan Hensleigh's film adaptation of the popular Marvel comic book about a former FBI agent who reinvents himself as a ruthless crimefighting vigilante when an evil crime syndicate kills his family.

Scorpy-Do: 2 Monsters Unleashed (CO, FP) Matthew Lillard, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Linda Cardellini and Freddie Prinze Jr. star in director Raja Gosnell's sequel to his 2002 hit, in which the Mystery, Inc. detective agency battles an evil scientist who has developed a machine that recreates the greatest foes from their past cases.

Starsky and Hutch (FP) Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Snoop Doggy star in *Old School* director Todd Phillips's irreverent film version of the 1970s TV cop show about a pair of mismatched policemen who fight crime with the aid of their souped-up Ford Torino and their omniscient street informer Huggy Bear.

13 Going on 30 (CO, FP) Jennifer Garner,

Mark Ruffalo, Kathy Baker and Judy Greer star in *Tadpole* director Gary Winick's comic fantasy about a gawky 13-year-old girl who wakes up one morning as her gorgeous, successful 30-year-old self as a result of a magical wish.

Touching the Void (CA) Joe Simpson, Simon Yates, Nicholas Aaron and Brendan Mackey star in *One Day in September* director Kevin Macdonald's documentary about Yates's astonishing, harrowing struggle to survive a disastrous mountaineering expedition in the Peruvian Andes. Based on the book by Joe Simpson.

Van Helsing (CO, FP) Hugh Jackman, Kate Beckinsale and Richard Roxburgh star in *The Mummy* director Stephen Sommers's CG-filled action/horror blockbuster, in which celebrated 19th-century monster hunter Abraham Van Helsing finds himself battling Count Dracula, the Wolf Man and Frankenstein's monster in a remote Eastern European village.

LEGEND

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EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285
FP: Famous Players
GA: Gameau Theatre, 433-0728
L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728
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A binge too far



Drug- and alcohol-fueled 3... 2... 1 is the best new play of the season

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

3... 2... 1 is a very hard kind of play to write. Written and performed by Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow, it's 90 minutes of two guys hanging out, shooting the shit, exchanging childhood memories, casually insulting each other, occasionally beating each other up and pouring so much alcohol and

cocaine into their system that you know very early on that there's no way the evening can possibly end well. The trick with this kind of project is figuring out how to write pages and pages of dialogue that sounds believable as aimless, guy-guy small talk without letting it actually become aimless, and on this count, Cuckow and Craddock have succeeded magnificently. What initially seems to be nothing more than a raucous, vulgar comedy builds, subtly but surely, to a tragic, borderline-melodramatic ending that's at once surprising and inevitable.

Craddock and Cuckow play Clinton and Kyle, two underachieving buddies who've lived their entire lives in Wetaskiwin. As the play begins and they embark upon an epic bender, chugging down three beers each in quick succession ("You've got to lay down a good base," Clinton explains) before moving onto the whiskey, the vodka, the pot, the cocaine, the poppers and the "optional" dose of heroin, you think they're indulging simply because, as citizens of Wetaskiwin, they've got no other way of entertaining themselves. But it soon becomes apparent that they're playing hooky from the funeral of their close friend Danny, whose loss has left them feeling, to use Clinton's oddly moving metaphor, like the Oilers after Gretzky left, but without a Messier around to pick up the slack.

Danny remains a ghostly, tantalizingly presence the play right until the end, but Cuckow and Craddock give us a very clear portrait of the

two friends he's left behind. Kyle is the rich kid, a passive friend who's always joined in with Clinton and Danny's wild behaviour even though he knows that it's only a matter of time before he'll have to pull up his socks and take a job at his dad's car dealership. Clinton is more full of contradictions; he's full of anger toward his shiftless, alcoholic dad even though he's similarly unambitious and fond of drinking to excess; he's at once deeply cynical about the world and yet he's also a sincere Christian; he's violently

rather than two kids from Wetaskiwin, the dialogue is so funny, energetic and often just plain inspired in its flights of profane imagination that you hardly care. And, except for the cheaply ironic song that we hear as the lights go down at the very end of the play, you never get the feeling that Cuckow and Craddock are condescending to their characters in their acting or their writing—underneath all the swearing and the dirty jokes, they take these guys' frustrations and their vague dreams of a better life very seriously.

Director Kevin Sutley and designer Marissa Kochanski have created a show that's perfectly scaled to the small Azimuth Theatre stage; Kochanski's set creates a vivid sense of place (it's the essence of every minimally furnished "guy's shack" you've ever seen) without hemming the actors in, while Sutley has found to way to let Craddock and Cuckow deliver two intense performances, full of screaming and shouting, in a way that doesn't overwhelm the audience members sitting just two feet away from them. Aaron Macri's cinematic sound design shows a similar sensitivity to the tricky dynamics that exist in the Azimuth space. 3... 2... 1 is the most satisfying new play I've seen all season; don't let the countdown reach zero before you've had a chance to see it yourself. ●

3... 2... 1

Directed by Kevin Sutley • Written and performed by Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow • Azimuth Theatre (11315-106 Ave) • To May 23 • 454-0583

Non-concrete Blond

Natalka Husar captures moments of uncertainty and ambiguity in *Blond With Dark Roots*

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

Every moment of every day we make another decision. It can be as small (albeit traumatizing) as figuring out what kind of coffee to buy at Second Cup, or as big as the choice between forgiving a friend or holding onto a lifelong grudge. Oddly, we don't have a word for this state of transition, but Tibetan Buddhists do; they call it the *barido*. The term usually refers to the state between one life and another, but it can also signify any fateful moment in which we decide our future path: Natalka Husar does a remarkable job of painting the *barido*. Not that her show *Blond With Dark Roots* is even vaguely Tibetan, but as I looked at her engrossing paintings, I found myself caught in a whirlwind of emotional decisions. Should I laugh? Should I weep? Should I feel sexy? Innocent? Attracted? Revolted? Depressed? Amused? There's no firm emotional ground to stand on in Husar's art; it's like shifting sands, filled with the fear and hope of all possibilities.

As I first enter Douglas Uddell Gallery, two pubescent girls look me straight in the eye. They peer from Husar's larger-than-life-size canvases with an unflinching glance. A fur coat wraps softly around one girl; another suggestively lifts a hot-red-painted eyebrow. Just as I begin to fear that Husar is intimating something erotically ominous, I look again and realize these are only young girls playing dress-up games. "They are girls in the age of limbo, just at the verge of sexuality, between adult and child, between being manipulated and manipulating," Husar explains. "The girl that's 13, you don't know if she will be jailbait or a supreme judge in

PREVIEW VISUAL ARTS

the Upper Court of Canada. My feelings towards them are ambivalent, between attraction and repulsion."

But these girls are not only caught between sexuality and play, between childhood and maturity; they're also hovering between two worlds. Husar's imaginary characters are Soviet immigrants. "The awkwardness that's in [adolescent] sexuality is parallel to the awkwardness in dislocation," she says. These girls have not shed their Slavic identity; something in their faces, the pulled-back hair, the tentative stance is still from the old world. Yet, standing at the cross-



roads of their future, of new life in America, they are filled with hope mingled with the fearful expanse of their potential. "These girls are empowered," Husar says. "Anything is possible, they can adjust."

THE ROOM the girls stand in hardly resembles the typical teenage bedroom. There are no posters of teen idols, no piles of clothing on the floor. Instead, a quirky stuffed rabbit holds a bottle of champagne in one corner of the canvas, while an odd assortment of paraphernalia fills the room as in some medieval allegory. "A lot of the things I started to paint, the paraphernalia, is also in-between cool and not cool, furs are fashionable and unfashionable," Husar explains. "Champagne is delicious and tacky, a travel bag is hip and pathetic." Each ambiguous and perplexing object has a story to tell.

For example, after Husar's 95-year-old aunt died, she left 25 old travel bags in her closet. "As I picked them up they were embedded with this plastic, brittle hope, yearning to travel again," Husar says wistfully. "At the same time, there was the impossibility of that hope."

Husar's work is not autobiographical—at least not in the way we might expect. True, she comes from a Slavic background, but she was born in the United States and never experienced the trauma of immigrant dislocation. She is a confident, articulate woman at the height of her career. One might say that she has arrived. So where does her show, this epic allegory of transitional states come from?

A large self-portrait hanging at the entrance gives us a clue to this mystery. It's a portrait of an artist as a "has-been." Now, Husar is the opposite of a has-been—her star is rising

swiftly, and she's becoming one of Canada's better-known artists. Yet beneath all the trappings of success, Husar has a profound knowledge of the fragility, the ambiguity and the risks of being a creative person. "No matter how successful you are," she says, "you're only as good as your last show. A part of the creative process is constantly feeling that you might lose it. With every painting it's a huge gamble."

Facing that vast, hopeful expanse of a white canvas is like facing your entire future. Just like the immigrant girls in her paintings, Husar faces an infinity of choices, and the all the yearning and dread of an uncertain future hang in the balance of every decision she makes. ●

BLOND WITH DARK ROOTS

By Natalka Husar • Douglas Uddell Gallery • To May 22

WORLD PREMIERE of

3...2...1

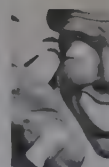
by Chris Craddock
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Azimuth Theatre
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May 7-23, 2004



ARTS



theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK
AND CHAD HUCULAK

Sex and Zen

Dialogue and Rebuttal • Timms Centre for the Arts (U of A) • May 13-22 • preVUE Studio Theatre's production of Gao Xingjian's *Dialogue and Rebuttal* reunites Jonathan Christenson and Beth Graham, whose scenes together in *The Blue Orphan* as downtrodden, shoeless paper seller Jim Tibue and Hortense, the optimistic wail who gives him a rare taste of happiness provided some of the most memorable and poignant theatrical moments of the last couple of seasons.

But their relationship in *Dialogue and Rebuttal* couldn't be more different: this time out, Christenson is a glibly confident sexual predator and Graham is a sexually experienced young woman he met a few hours earlier in a bar. The play itself, which begins just after the couple finishes making love and just as they start playing intellectual power games and debating the difference between men

and women, couldn't be more different, either—where *The Blue Orphan* was lushly designed, intricately plotted and appealed to an audience's heartstrings, *Dialogue and Rebuttal* is stark, minimalist, plotless and designed to inspire meditation, not jerk tears. (There's even a third character, a Zen monk played by dancer Sonja Myllymaki, whose meditative exercises provide a calm counterpoint to the often violent argument being waged elsewhere on the stage.)

"It's sort of a cubist view of two characters after a one-night stand," says director Goesta Struve-Dencher, whose M.F.A. in directing at the U of A is nearly complete once this project is over with. "We've been reading and rereading this script for several months now and it doesn't reveal itself at first glance. When I spoke with [Beth and Jonathan] and gave them a script, they both came back and they expressed interest in it as well as some degree of perplexity. But it was obviously something that hooked them, and then the problem became one of figuring out the best way to approach it."

One of the bigger challenges Struve-Dencher faced in staging the play for a Western audience was Gao's unconventional, post-Brechtian performance style. As Struve-Dencher explains, where Brecht saw two aspects to the figures onstage, the character and the actor playing them, Gao—and I'm wildly simplifying here—sees three: the character, the actor and what could be called the "neutral actor," a kind of purified essence-of-actor who negotiates between the other two personae. "The way he explains it," Struve-Dencher says, "is that in traditional Chinese theatre, the person who the actor is steps into the dressing room and as they strip away who they are and what they wear, they become this empty vessel who then puts on the character in the play. The most obvious equivalent in the West occurs when someone appears onstage as the character and poses for a moment as the applause breaks out. And what they're applauding, according to Gao, is not the character or the actor, but aesthetic moment of seeing the actor present the character before going back into the drama."

This technique shows up a few times in *Dialogue and Rebuttal* in scenes where the man and the woman refer to themselves in the third person, as if observing themselves from outside their bodies. But those moments of release are very hard for the two characters to sustain. "What takes place onstage," Struve-Dencher says, "is the struggle between the human being trapped in reality and the yearning for transcendence and enlightenment that's always just out of reach... These characters are deeply alone, they're trying to figure out who they are. The woman is a very independent sort of world traveler, but she puts herself into situations where she becomes victimized because she believes that in sexual surrender she can lose herself



Director Goesta Struve-Dencher

For the man, it's the opposite; he feels that having a sense of control and collecting these women and understanding them he'll have a greater understanding of himself."

Dialogue and Rebuttal certainly asks a lot more of its audience than, say, *The Sound of Music*, but Struve-Dencher (whose recent projects include a new translation of Goethe's *Faust*) has tried to make the play as much a sensory experience as an intellectual one with the addition of live music and video projections. "It's a musical approach," he says. "Not musical in the sense of singing and dancing, but it's like a piece of music, where you've got this polyphony of intellectual, sensory, dramatic, visual things going on.... You don't need a Ph.D. to understand it; it's very basic. In fact, it helps

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not to think too much about it. It's like those Zen writings that go on and on but which also say that none of these words will tell you how to become enlightened. So then the student asks, 'Well, how do I become enlightened?' and the Zen master hits him on the head. In some ways, this play is a very gentle Zen rap on the head." (PM)

Carnival knowledge

Carnival of Shrieking Youth • Arts Barns • To May 24 The figurehead for the Carnival of Shrieking Youth is the famous screeching character from Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream*—a choice that might lead you to believe there will be some actual shrieking onstage.

"No," jokes artistic/festival director Karl Schreiner, "It's more of a cry from young artists to be seen and heard artistically."

Now in its 12th year, the Carnival is an open opportunity for young Albertans between the ages of 11 to 25 with inclinations in drama and the arts to perform live in front of an audience that doesn't consist solely of supportive parents and uninterested high school students.

Schreiner started COSY in 1992 as a response to all the young people who kept telling him that there weren't any theatrical opportunities for them because of their age and inexperience. Like the age-old adage goes: they couldn't get a job because they had no experience and they couldn't get any experience because no one would give them a job.

In 1994, the small local festival became a provincial one when it was handed over to the Theatre Squared Society of Alberta, who opened up the application process to communities across Alberta. It's been expanding in size and scope ever since, from its humble beginnings as a three-play, four-day event to its current slate of 18 new plays, a visual arts exhibition and a cluster of live music performances stretching over three weeks.

Schreiner says each festival has been an improvement over the one that came before it—and this year's edition is "phenomenal in scope and

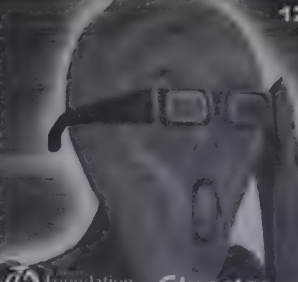
scale and subject matter."

"There's a ton of untapped talent," he adds. "Some of the plays [are] written by first-time playwrights, and you see the potential of growth of where they're going to."

Among the more interesting projects among this year's crop of productions is David Johnson's *24/7*, a dark comedy about an average Joe who is forced against his will to become the solitary star of a new reality show (a twist on the usual attention hogs who readily jump in front of reality show cameras); and Angela Wight's *Illusions*, about two sisters brought up in a small town but raised differently as an experiment in social conditioning—one is trained to become a "high society princess," the other a "cultured intellectual."

Participating in the festival for the third time is Josh Languedoc. The 17-year-old is doing a staged reading of his play *Questions* and is also directing Ian Younle's *Confessional*. Languedoc describes *Confessional* as being "mainly about sort of letting go of the past." "The main character, Aaron, has the past cling to him," he says. "He's gay and his ex-boyfriend killed himself. One day someone who looks like his dead lover comes into his workplace and he is forced to confront the past." Commenting on what it's like to direct actors around his age, he says, "They know exactly what they're doing. They're very organized and disciplined."

Directing *Illusions* is 25-year-old Martin Villote, who's in his fourth year with the festival. Like many COSY participants, he's involved in more than one production, having also written the script for *Brigade of Fire*, a saga about superhuman teens fighting off an alien invasion. That kind of multitasking is a welcome contrast to the normal state of affairs for young theatre artists, most of whom can struggle all year to get even one production in front of an audience, let alone two simultaneously. "Most venues seem reserved for actors in their late 20s," Villote says. "There should be more of these things. It's nice to have more venues other than school." (CH) ●



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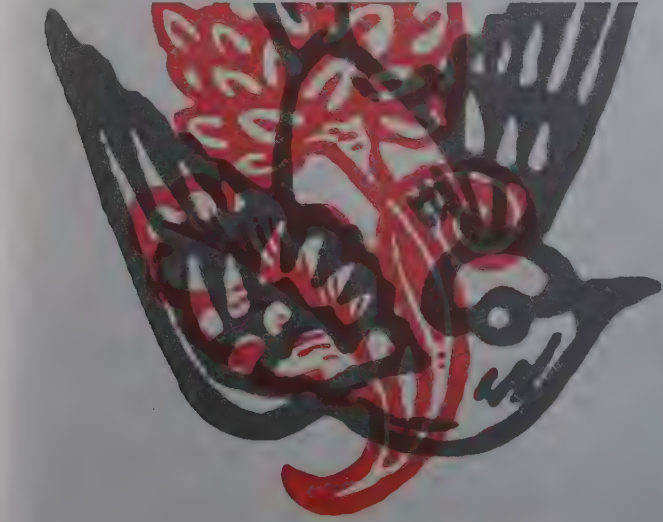
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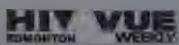


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ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10116-106 St (488-6611/4808-5900) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **New Lower Level Gallery: HANDWORK SERIES: TO THE BONE**, In *THE BLOOD, FROM THE HEART: Series by Calgary tapestry artist Jane Kido*, May 8-July 7 • **RIVE LEGS, GREAT CHISTS, HOT SEAT**: Works by NAIT's Advanced Woodworking and Furniture Design graduating class; May 22-July 7

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St, Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • Paintings by Andrew Rzewski

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Knol Building, 10217-106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pederson, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende, Greg Swain, Anna Szul, Eugene Ushad and guests

BLACK GOLD GALLERY AND FRAME 1778-106 Ave, Leduc (986-6393) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm • Featuring mixed media artworks by Arthur Evoy (1924-2003) as well as prints of various artists artworks • Through May

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 9103-95 Ave (461-3427) • **NOW AND THEN**: Artworks by George Kuback, Eva Hontela, Leonie Poole, and Ella Nicholson • Opening reception: May 14 (7-8:30pm)

CHANDLER ART GALLERY 5002-50 St (436-5843/477-3463) • **CHIRIGLI-E EXHIBITION** • May 22-June 5

CHRISTIE BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 7421 Whyte Ave (439-8210) • Open: Mon-Fri 11am-5pm, Sat, by appointment • **SUMMER SALON**: Oil paintings by Christie Bergstrom • Until September 30

DOUGLAS IDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • **BLOOD WITH DARK ROOTS**: Paintings by Natalia Husar • Until May 22

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • Ken Macklin: until June 6 • **REED NOTES**: Artworks by the O'Flanagan brothers; until June 6 • **A VISIT WITH ARTISTS**: Tom O'Flanagan; Thu, May 20; exhibition tour with Tom O'Flanagan (6pm); slide lecture in theatre (7pm) • **HIRE ART**: Quilts, clothing and textile designs; lower level; until June 1 • **IMAGES OF EDMONTON**: until Sept. 19 • **ALL IN ONE DAY SUNDAY**: Sun, May 23 • **ART FOR LUNCH**: EAG Theatre; Thu, May 27 • **Kitchen Gallery: TIDAL TRACE**: A multimedia installation by Lyndal Osborne and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Children's Galleries: SPELLBOUND**: until Jan. 2005 • \$8 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior), \$4 (children 6-12)/free (member/children 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open: Wed-Fri 10am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-4pm, closed long weekends • **NEW WORKS**: Paintings by Kate More • Until May 29

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl, 8303-112 St • Open: Mon-Fri 8am-4pm • **ENDLESS DISCOVERY**: Artworks by Ana Cristina Ferguson • May 17-26 • Opening reception: May 14 (6-8:30pm)

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **TO CALL ME ISHMAEL**: Artworks by Carolyn Campbell; May 18-29; opening reception Thu, May 20 (7-10pm) • **DESIGNING A BETTER JOE**: Design works by Adrian Cho • May 29 • Opening reception: May 20 (7-10pm)

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings, knicks by G. Arluk. Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by M. Tallo • Through May

FRINGE GALLERY 85mt 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm **FAMILIAR RINGS**: Paintings by Carol Wyle • Until May 31

GALLERY DE JONGE 27022A Hwy 16A, Spruce Grove (962-9505) • Open Tue-Sun 11-5pm, anytime by appointment • Work by local artists Beth Coulas, Earl Cummins, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **AM I GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, SEX, FOOD?** Artworks by Shelley Rothenburger; until June 12 • **Front Rooms** • **BORDERLINE**: Artworks by Kristine Callan; until June 12

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • **SPRING DEBUT**: Until June 1

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by Jim Akerman, Jim Brager, Glenda Beaver, Jack Ellis, Linda Nelson, George Toszczak, George Werber, Peter by Raymond Cox, bronzes by Gina McDougall-Cohoe • Through May

JOHNSON GALLERY 11617-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Andrew Reilman, Alk Roberge, prints by Toti, Edmonton Sky Line prints by Loren Chabot, Photographs of Edmonton River Valley Area by John Johnson • Through May

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St (423-5353) • **IN-BETWEEN**: Until May 14 • **5TH ANNUAL VISUALIZE**: A festival of performance art and time-based art featuring the curatorial focus of time; May 20-29

LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY 455 King Street, Spruce Grove • **2004 ALBERTA COMMUNITY ARTS CLUB ZONE SHOW FOR CENTRAL ALBERTA**: Paintings by artists age 15-18 from central Alberta • May 13-14 (12-5pm), May 15 (12-3pm)

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • **ALEGRIA**: Paintings and sculptures by Annette Ayre, Carol Hill, Pat Di Marcello, Ingrid Martel, Mary Topping, Jayne Willoughby Scott and Mary Wright • Until June 20

MCMAC MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-3777) • Open 10am-4pm • **SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI**: Paintings and drawings by Myles MacDonald • Until May 26

MUSEE HERITAGE MUSEUM 5 St, Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm • **SCIENCE ON THE MOVE**: Until June 27 • Science: hows, whats and whys: May 15 (1pm)

ORTONA GALLERY 9722-102 St (439-6943) • **HAPPY ACCIDENTS**: A night of art and design • May 15 (8pm)

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm; Thu 10am-8pm • **HIGH ENERGY IX**: Art work by St. Albert's High Schools; until May 29 • ArtVentures: For children 6-12; \$2/child; May 15-14pm

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open: Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • **THE BIRD GALLERY**: Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH**: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY**: Permanent exhibit • Wild Alberta every weekend. Presentations start at 1pm and 2pm • Admission is half price Sat and Sun (9-11am)

RED STRAP ART MARKET 10305-97 St (497-2211) • Open: Tue-Sun 11am-5pm • Artworks by various artists and artisans

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **NEW WORKS**: Landscape paintings and still life pastels by Jacquelin Stehelin • Until May 25

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **HOW TO BECOME A MIRROR** SNAP membership show • Until May 22

SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM 8882-170 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY Centre for Reading and the Arts • **MILLENNIUM IN A BOX**: Handmade books, a conceptual interpretation of where the millennium is leading by Canadian artists; until June 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • **FACES AND PLACES**: Artworks by Alexandra Abernigh, Bruce Allen, Doug Fraser, Susanne Loutas, Mary Lee Small, Helen Smith, Bruce Thompson, Pat Wagensveld • Until June 26

STUDIO 321 Rice Howard Way, 10168-100A St (424-6746) • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • **THE FATHER SON EXHIBIT**: Landscapes, florals, portraits by Marc Munan and sculptures by Louis Munan

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • **PLATINUM PERCEPTIONS**: Photographs by Allan King; until June 12

VANDERLEELIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • **SWAN LAKE** Oil paintings by Emily Bickell • Until May 18

WILDMOOD GALLERY AND STUDIO 5410-50 St, Wildwood, (780) 325-3944 • Open: Wed-Sun 11am-5pm, or by appt • Metal, wood, reed, and clay sculptures by Pat Di Marcello and other artists • Through May

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Fl, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122 ext. 226) • Open: Mon-Fri 12-5pm • **437/537 SPECIAL PROJECTS**: Photo-based artworks by Zach Ayotte, Reece Steinberg, Erin Ignacio • Until May 21

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Reading by Shauna Singh Baldwin from her upcoming novel, *The Tiger Claw*; Thu, May 13 (7-30pm) • Ted Barris presents his new book *John: Canadians at D-Day*, June 6, 1944; Fri, May 14 (7-30pm) • Reading by Chris Fisher from his new short fiction collection *Third and Long*; reading by Larry Gaspar from his new collection of stories *Princess Wasp*; Mon, May 17 (7-30pm) • Reading by Holly

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turning from Swoy; reading by Triny Finlay from her new book, *Sitting Off*; Wed, May 19 (7:30pm) • Matthew Jackson talks about his new book *The Canoe Chronicles: A Four-Year Hitchhiking Odyssey*; Fri, May 21 (noon) • Reading by Carmen Rodriguez; Fri, May 21 (7:30pm) • Janet Knudsen reads from her book *Porcelain Doll*; Tue, May 25 (7:30pm) • Gail Sidonie Sobat reads from *A Writer's Tale*; Thu, May 27 (7:30pm) • Donna Kane reads from her book of poems *Somewhere a Fire*; Fri, May 28 (7:30pm) • Barry Dempster reads from *Warring Out*; A. J. Levin reads from *Monks' Fruit*; Mon, May 31 (7:30pm)

GREENWOODS BOOKSHOPPE 7925-104 St (479-2005) • Explore Canada's back yard with Arctic adventure racer John Firsh and author Lee Updill; May 13 (7:30 pm) • Reading by Ian McGilly, author of *A Tourist's Guide to Glenngary*; Wed, May 26

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CENTRE Rm 2-47, 9103-112 St (423-3487) • Reading by Singh Baldwin from her upcoming novel, *The Tiger Claw*; Fri, May 14 (noon) • Room 2-47, David Staples and Greg Southam pay tribute to Barb Tarbox and discuss their new book, *Barb's Miracle: How Barb Tarbox Turned Her Deadly Cancer Into a Life Saving Crusade*; Thu, May 20 (7pm) • Room 3-40; Kate Brad reads from a selection of her poetry and prose; Fri, June 4 (noon)

WHITEMUD CROSSING LIBRARY THEATRE 4211-106 St (420-1757) • *See A Wish Story* presented by T.A.L.E.S. Edmonton • Stones told in the oral tradition by local storytellers • May 13

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to lists@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

BISHOP JOHN SHELBY SPONG Sherwood Park United Church, 20 Fir St, Sherwood Park (481-8400/420-1757) • Presented by the Spiritual Living Centre of Edmonton. Bishop Spong discusses his book *Born of a Woman: The Virgin Birth and The Treatment of Women in a Male Dominated Church and A New Christianity for a New World: Why Traditional Faith is Dying and How a New Faith is Being Born* • May 15 (3pm-5pm) and 7:30-9:30pm • \$35 (single session/\$50 (combined session)) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square, the Spiritual Living Centre

CRITIZENS FOR INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS Kilkenny Community League Hall, 14920-72 St (473-8224) • Presentation of CPA featuring speaker Ken Gosling • Wed, May 19 (7:30pm)

EDMONTON AGAINST WAR AND NUCLEAR Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Courtyard door 107A Ave, 100 St (988-2713) • General meeting and discussion planning for an "End the Occupation of Iraq" event June 30 • Sun, May 16 (7:30pm)

ETHNIC HISTORY: CULTURAL DESTRUCTION IN KOSOVO U of A Humanities Bldg, HC-11 (437-4191) • Discussion featuring speakers James Bissett, Scott Taylor, David Goa, and Ken Hylkawy • May 18 (7:10pm)

EDMONTON ASSOCIATION FOR BRIGHT CHILDREN Sun Room, Alberta School for the Deaf, 6240-113 St (454-8846) • Brighter Horizons Adult Education Series: Update on gifted education in Edmonton Public Schools • Sat, May 15 (10am-noon) • Free

FEED YOUR SOUL DAYS FOR WOMEN (479-5011) • Connect with other women and feed your soul • May 29 • Pre-register

HEART DISEASE: ADVANCEMENTS IN TREATMENT OFFER HOPE Bernard Snell Hall, Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-1644/407-8408) • Presented by Dr. Dylan Taylor • Tue, May 16 (7:30pm)

INFLUENZA: CHICKEN FLU-WHY THE MAJOR CONCERN? Bernard Snell Hall, Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre, U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-1644/407-8408) • Presented by Dr. Lorne Taylor • Wed, May 19 (7:30pm)

KARMA TASHI LAM TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Lojong (Mind Training) Tape series meeting every Wed (7:30pm)

RELIGIOUS WOMEN: IMAGE AND IDENTITY St George's Anglican Church, 11733-87 Ave (438-5916) • Presentation and discussion about Catherine Goodrich's *The Book of Lamentations: Religious Devotion and Women's Identity and Jean George's Crucified Women: A Rejected image of the "Dutch Woman"* • Thu, May 13 (7:30pm)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (423-2932) • Storytelling Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-

(448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Will Davis, May 14-15 • Tim Koslo; May 21-22 • Jon Charles, May 28-29

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Improv comedy • Every Sun

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St (481-2786) • Comedy Mondays With Yul Yuls on Tour

REDY'S WEM (481-6420) • Hypno Sounders • 9:30pm • Sebastian Steel; May 17, May 23, May 30

THEATRE

CARNIVAL OF SHRIEKING YOUTH • Transalta Arts Barns (499-1271) • Theatre Squared's 12th annual festival devoted to plays, play readings, concerts and visual arts exhibitions created and performed by dozens of emerging Edmontonian teen artists. See www.theatresquared.com for a full schedule of events • Until May 24

CAROUSEL Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Rodgers and Hammerstein's tearjarring musical adaptation of Ferenc Molnar's play *Lilom*, about an irresponsible carnival barker who is allowed to return from the dead for one day and try to repair the lives of the wife and teenage daughter he left behind • Until July 4 • Tickets available at Mayfield Dinner Theatre box office

CHIMPOTVI Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave

(448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

DIALOGUE AND REBUTTAL Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A Campus, 87 Ave, 112 St (492-2495) • Presented by Studio Theatre • Goesta Struss • Dencher directs Barb Graham and Jonathan Christensen in Nobel Prize-winning author Gao Xingjian's philosophical two-hander about a man and a woman who furiously debate the nature of life, death, sex and loneliness following a passionate sexual encounter • May 13-22 (8pm), matinee: Thu, May 21 (12:30pm), no show Sunday, May 16 • \$8-520 • Tickets available at Timms Centre box office

DIAGNOSTIC Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Meier, Josh Dean, Davina Stewart and Leona Brausen celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Kirk and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM Kaasa Theatre, basement Jubilee Auditorium (420-1757) • Presented by ELOP Musical Theatre • Stephen Sondheim's classic musical about a clever, convincing dave whose master promises to grant him his freedom if he can arrange for the woman he loves to marry him instead of the vain soldier his father has promised her to • May 13, 15, 16 (7:30pm) • \$21-50 (adults)/\$16-50 (students/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

IT'S CORY COUNTRY Azimuth Theatre, 11315-106 Ave (420-1757) • Presented by Mostly Water Theatre • May 25-29 (8pm) • \$10 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LOVE + LOVE Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway

graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a supportive environment (hall and winter terms). Contact: Kate Wells (kwell@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Wonham (mwonham@ualberta.ca) for info • www.ualberta.ca/~ci-ed/esp/AgendaYerdana.htm

LUNDBO CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Gamae United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm). Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/livpos (488-5768) • Edmonton Parents Living with HIV Society. Peer facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

OUT IS IN (492-0767) • A youth arts project about GLBT issues, and addressing homophobia in schools and in the community • For more info www.ualberta.ca/~outsin or outsin@ualberta.ca

PELAG GLCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgendered

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-22771-877-8821, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Tue 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • TUE Hot Bud: Amateur strip with Weena Liu, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • THU: Rotating shows: Ladonna's review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • FRI: *Upstart*: Euro and New European music with DJ Outwack, DJ Jazzy and male stripper

Downstairs: female stripper • SAT: Every Sat like new years: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, new music with DJ Dan and Mike Downstairs: Retro music with Betty and the Hangover Clinic Show: Beer Bash: every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member), Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

TRANSALTA TIBETAN SUPPORT GROUP egre@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Tue 1-12; Fri-Sat 1-3 • Gay nighting. Every Sun-Tue (7-12am): karaoke with Tizzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and

Boulevard (431-1750) • An unusual new blend of theatre, visual art and music co-created by actor/playwright/composer Jonathan Christensen and designer Bette Gerecke • May 21-June 5 • \$21 (adults)/\$16 (student) • Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

OCEAN'S ELEVEN AND A HALF Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Oass Entertainment Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd (489-9339) • Charming criminal Harry Ocean reunites his old gang of bumbling thieves in order to pull off the dining casino heist in this multi-spook thriller *Ocean's 11* • May 15-Aug 7 • \$34-\$49.95 • For Tickets, call 448-9339

PITHI Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) voice box 2 (420-1757) • Leona Brausen, Jeff Haslam and Davina Stewart star in this revival of director/playwright Stewart Lemoine's magical 1997 Fringe play about a charming duffer who uses the power of imagination to provide a grieving New England widow with a sense of closure about the fate of her husband, who disappeared during an expedition into the South American jungle • May 20-June 5 (Tue-Sat 8pm, Sat 2pm) • \$18 (adults)/\$15 (student/senior/Equity) • www.what-you-can.com, Tue evenings and Sat matinee, Two-for-One Fri, May 21 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

SECRET SPACES: THE BUS PROJECT Bus, leaving from The 3rd Space, 11516-103 St (477-5955/420-1750) • Presented by Workshop West Theatre • Ron Jenkins directs Robert Cormier, Cathy Derkach, Chris Fassender, Dave Horak and Bridget Ryan in this unusual theatrical experience, in which audiences travel around Edmonton on a bus in order to witness new site-specific short plays by Ken Brown, Marty Chan, Beth Graham, Mielko Ouchi and Cathleen Rootsaert • May 21-June 13 • \$30 (opening night)/\$25 (adults)/\$22 (student/senior) • Tickets available at Workshop West, TIX on the Square

Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCE), 45, 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.yuyouth.inpod.com/yuy • Every Sat (7:30pm), A facilitated support group (support group/ca), a lesbian, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

ACTIVIST WORKSHOP Gazebo Park, 83 Ave, 104 St (439-8725) • Workshop on theatre activism, reading and book launch for Mike Hudema's book *An Actor's Day: Keeping Global Capitalism Away* • Sat, May 15 (11am-2:30pm)

ALL STAR HIP HOP CONTEST Sun Night Club, 10551-82 Ave (445-2323) • Hip hop talent show presented by Captain Abdu • Sun, May 23, 8pm (door), 9:30pm (show)

ARTS DISTRICT OPEN HOUSE (420-1757) • **CBC Broadcast Centre**: Mo Lefer and friend (jazz guitar) • **The Edmonton Art Gallery**: Workshops, video screenings of the PBS video series *Art 21: Art in the Twenty-first Century*, and a scavenger hunt • **Wingspacer Centre**: Featuring the Davis Pipe Organ • **Citadel Theatre**: Backstage tours • **Stanley A. Milner Library**: Program: *The Decorated Page: Making Scrapbooks and Journals*, the Bill Dammur Jazz Trio, magic show by Ron Pearson • **Metro Cinema**: *Prarie Tales*, *Alvin* made short films and videos • **Wuthering Heights** • Information available at TIX on the Square • Sun, May 30 (noon-4pm)

AWARDS GALA U of A Campus (424-7709) • Awards to recognize and honour individuals who have become successful in their chosen field after arriving in Canada. Hosted by the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers • May 25 (7pm)

CANADIAN VOCAL ARTS FESTIVAL www.vocalarts.ca (420-1757) • Presented by Opera Nuova • May 23 to June 20 • Passes for the entire event (not including the Ambassador Concert) \$95 (adults)/\$55 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

CELEBRATION OF BARB TARBOX • City Hall: Celebration of Barb Tarbox and her anti-tobacco legacy, on the one-year anniversary of her death by cancer: May 18 (noon) • **Macdonald Community College**, 106 St. Bldg, Multipurpose Room: book launch; May 20 (7:30pm)

CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOCIATION Rundle Park and Rundle Centre • CP 100 Bike-a-ton: Teams will compete on stationary and recreational bikes • Sat, May 15 (9am) • Register: 1-800-363-2807 or www.cpalberta.com

EDMONTON NATURALIZATION SOCIETY John Janzen Nature Centre (496-2925) • Celebrate the grand opening of the Native Plant Garden • May 22-24 (1-4pm) • Free

EDMONTON A SOCIETY FOR CHILDREN WITH AIDS Santa Maria Goretti Centre, 11050-90 St (423-5964) • Fundraising dinner, local musicians, and a video presentation from the initiatives to HIV/AIDS • Fri, May 21, 6pm (cocktail), 7pm (dinner) • TIX \$40

JAPAN CULTURE DAYS 6750-88 St (466-8166) • Presented by Edmonton's Japanese Community Association • May 15 (noon)

LOVE + LOVE THE GALA Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) • Catalyst Theatre fundraiser • May 29 • Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

THE SOUND OF MUSIC The Citadel, Shocher Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Tom Wood directs Rodgers and Hammerstein's family musical about the romance that blossoms between an emotional singer and the head of the government, guitarist-strumming nun he hires to act as governess for his seven children • Until June 6 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

SPIRITS OF THE ORPHEUM LEDC Performing Art Centre, 4308-50 St, LEDC (987-0278) • Presented by the LEDC Drama Society proudly • Songs, music, and costumes on the Roof, Cats and the Phantom of the Opera are featured in this musical revue about a young man who inherits the legendary Orpheum Theatre and finds that it is haunted by the spirits of the characters from the great musicals that were once performed there

• May 13-15 (8pm) • \$10 (Thu)/\$12 (Fri-Sat) • Tickets available at LEDC Public Library

THE SPITFIRE GRILL La Cité Francophone, 8627-91 St (420-1757) • Presented by Leave it to Jane Theatre • May 14-23 (8pm, 2pm Sun matinee) • \$18 (adults)/\$15 (student/senior/Equity) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

THEATRESPECTS Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri, 11pm • Tickets available at phone

• May 2, 11 (11pm-106 Ave (454-0583)) • Presented by Azimuth Theatre • Two lifelong buddies get drunk, do drugs and share childhood memories while creating a musical based on a musical found in this intense comedy/drama written and performed by Chris Caddock and Nathan Cuckow • Until May 23 • Tickets available by phone at 454-0583

REALITY SHOW: ETHNICITY AND ARTS www.vocalarts.ca • Theatre, Citadel's Lee Pavilion, 9828-101A Ave (1-888-689-6872) • An evening of music, dance and art inspired by the ethnic diversity of the city featuring Randy Raine Reusch (sax music) • Thu, May 13 (7pm) • \$10 (senior/student/child) • Tickets available at any Travel CUTS office in Edmonton

RELAY FOR LIFE OF U of A's Foote Field 11601-68 Ave (437-8419) • Canadian Cancer Society, Tyler Hamilton, from Canadian Idol's first season, is scheduled to perform, Spokesperson • May 28 (7pm)

ROCK FOR THE PAWS! Red's, WEM (479-9361) • Fundraising for animal rescue and adoption presented by Wags and Whiskers, Animal Crackers, The Animal Cancer Therapy Subsidization Society • Sun, May 16 (1-4pm) • \$5

SHADOW THEATRE: THE FUNDRAISER 53, 10248-106 St (434-5564) • Featuring performances by Andrea House, Bryce Kall, Sheri Somerville and others, a silent auction, a new 10-minute play from David Belke *The Down Stage Direction*, and sneak peeks from *Shadow Theatre's* 2004/2005 season • May 15 • \$30

STONY PLAIN COUNTRY MARKET OPENING Exhibition Park, Stony Plain • Fresh farm produce, crafts, meet Harley the little horse, entertainment by Mylouth and Old Eric • Sat, May 22 (9am-1pm)

VIVA SKID ROW Stanley Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (433-4853/428-0085) • Featuring dance, drama, poetry, song and gymnastics • Fri, May 14 (7:30pm) • Admission by donation, proceeds go towards the publication of Edmonton Street News

WATERWALKER FILM FESTIVAL Metro Cinema, Zedler Hall, Citadel Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (488-6614 ext. 231) • Canada's film festival on canoeing, kayaking, and the conservation of waterways • Thu, May 13 (7pm) • \$8 (adv)/\$10 (door) • 6:30pm (door), 7pm (show)

WINTER WALKERS Edmonton and Area Mennonite Society Convocation Hall, Old Arts Building, U of A Campus (438-5976) • Performance of Aboriginal women and spirituality • Fri, May 14 (7pm)

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (423-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Every Thu (9pm) • Music trivia with Escape Entertainment • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm); with Escape Entertainment

BILLY BUDD'S 9839-61 Ave (438-1118) • Karaoke Idol contest • Every Sat (8:30pm)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm); Hosted by Jeannie

CLAREVIEW PUB Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave (454-9928) • Every Wed • **GAS PUMP** 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun (Wed) (9pm)

L.B.'S 23 Alkins Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue/Thu (9pm)

LEGENDS 6104-162 St (481-2786) • Every Wed (9pm)

MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon; with Jammin' Jamie

ORLANDO'S 115613-121 St (457-1195) • Every Sun (9pm)/Wed (10pm)



free will astrology

By ROB BREZSNY

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 18

Whirl-Zap-Gush (the Supreme Being formerly known as God) has choreographed a rigorous dance for you to do this week. It has a mix of primal and elegant elements; it's both meditative and profanely funny. A good title for this mysterious spectacle might be "Holy Ruckus" or "Sacred Up roar." As always, of course, you have free will: you can refuse to do the dance as Whirl-Zap-Gush has choreographed it and instead go off and try your own spontaneous improvisations. But for maximum beauty, truth and fulfillment, I suggest you stick with the divinely designed moves.

TAURUS

Apr 20 - May 20

It's time to get a new soundtrack for your life. Whatever music has served as your mythic theme all this time just doesn't cut it any more. You need to sing and listen to songs that resonate with the fresh emotional currents that are flowing through you. As you update this primary source of inspiration, I suggest you turn your attention to others as well. Look for a book that can change your life, a role model to inflame your imagination and a pair of magic underpants.

GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

I'm falling in love with you all over again, Gemini. You've been turning frustration into fuel, and that has impressed me deeply. I'm fascinated by how you've been using your sense of desperation as a good excuse to go crazy in creative and constructive ways. Your inner child and your inner wiseass have been collaborating to pull off unpredictable departures from tradition, and I find that very entertaining. I especially admire the warrior energy you've been bringing to your dreams: how you punched a hole in the nightmare, how you told jokes to the monster, how you risked everything to wake up.

CANCER

June 21 - July 22

Cancerian singer George Michael recently announced that he intends to give away his music for free, posting it on the Internet for anyone to download. "I've been very well remunerated for my talents over the years," he told BBC, "so I really don't need the public's money." Given the current astrological omens, dear Crab, it makes perfect sense for you to regard Michael as your role model in the coming week. I urge you to expand your generosity to the next level as you provide free samples of a resource or skill you've been blessed with in abundance.

LEO

July 23 - Aug 22

Emotional Violence for Dummies was the alternate title Cintra Wilson gave to the film *Mystic River*. Writing in Salon.com, she said that while Sean Penn is normally a great actor, the role for which he won his Oscar was overwrought. "I've seen more skillfully calibrated grief at Super Bowl parties," Wilson mused. She speculated that the Academy was "playing catch-up ball," rewarding him for the better work he has done in pre-

vious movies. I'm guessing that you will soon have a similar experience, Leo. Like Penn, who was born in the sign of the Lion, you may get more credit or recognition than you seemingly deserve for your current efforts. But it will be well-deserved compensation for the undervalued wonders you pulled off in the past.

VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sept 22

It just ain't natural for a Virgo to be a spectacular exhibitionist. We astrologers might be forgiven, then, if we've wondered how the singer Beyoncé could possibly be a member of your tribe, as she claims to be. Recently, the mystery was solved. In an interview with the *Star*, Beyoncé revealed that a character named Sasha takes over her body onstage. "There's no way I'd wear a short little dress and dance like that in front of all those people," she said. I bring this up, Virgo, because I'd like you to consider acquiring your own alternate personality. He or she could help you fulfill your current cosmic mandate, which is to climb to a rooftop or mountaintop or tabletop and do a song and dance dedicated to the person you want to be five years from today.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22

There's a book by Mira Kirshenbaum called *Too Good to Leave, Too Bad to Stay: A Step-By-Step Guide to Helping You Decide Whether to Stay in or Get Out of Your Relationship*. Her aim is to help her readers "move from painful ambivalence to a clear sense of knowing what to do" about their relationships. I'll be saying a prayer with that theme for you this week, Libra. Whether the relationship in question is with a person or group or job or institution, it's high time for you to be free of swampy vacillation so you can glide into the future with a decisive, free-spirited vision.

SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21

These days, Scorpio, you're like a jeweler who doesn't own any jewelry; you're like a TV repairperson who never watches TV. The state you're in reminds me of an expert gardener watering the tomato plants when it's raining. You have the aura of a mother without any children or a general whose army is hiding from him. I'm not saying that any of this is a bad thing. It's actually pretty enigmatic and interesting. And for all I know, there may be some method in your madness. Perhaps you're daring fate to give you what you don't know you need.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21

The placebo effect is a well-known but little-understood phenomenon in medical science. Studies have shown that up to a third of all sick people feel better after receiving pills with no active ingredients. The reason may lie in the body's powerful instinct to participate in its own healing. When it believes help is on the way in the form of medication, it joins in by releasing endorphins, the natural opiates that induce relaxation and a sense of well-being. These thoughts lead me to my analysis of your astrological omens, Sagittarius: I believe that your current ailments, both physical and psychological, are exactly the kind that are most responsive to placebo cures. So load up! M&Ms are effective, I've found, as are Pez candy and the little white pills in toy doctors' kits.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 18

Here's how cartoonist Matt Groening feels about love: "Love is a perkily elf dancing a merry little jig and then suddenly he turns on you with a miniature machine gun." Here, on the other hand, is what composer

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart believed: "Neither a lofty degree of intelligence nor imagination nor both together go to the making of genius. Love, love, love, that is the soul of genius." My analysis of the astrological omens leads me to suspect that in the coming weeks your life will be a vivid embodiment of one of those two definitions: Capricorn. Which will win out? The outcome will have nothing to do with blind fate. It'll depend entirely on whether you choose to play romantic games or else devote yourself to the highest form of love you can imagine.

AQUARIUS

Jan 23 - Feb 18

What if I told you that you can change the past? It's true, Aquarius. You now have power over your memories. It's a perfect moment to adjust them, correct them and reconfigure them so they will serve you better in the future. You're also in a good position to declare your independence from old images that have been oppressing you. There's no need to feel trapped into being who you used to be if that's not who you are anymore.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

Last summer, three exhibitors at the Ohio State Fair tried to fool a panel of judges. The men glued hairpieces on their cows in an effort to hide the animals' sagging backs. But inspectors discovered the bovine toupees and disqualified the cheaters. Now, if you Pisceans tried something like this in the coming week, you'd probably get away with it—at least according to my analysis of the astrological omens. I don't recommend it, though. Ironically, you're far more likely to win competitions or succeed at challenges if you don't engage in subterfuge. Being honest and ethical will give you an unbeatable power you can't tap into any other way. ☺

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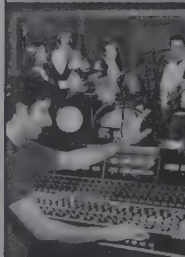
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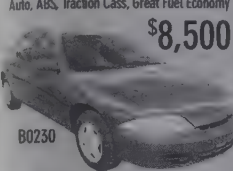
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alt sex column

BY ANDREA NEMERSON

Thatch entertainment

Dear Andrea:

Am I being selfish to want to keep my pubic hair? There's only one guy in my history who actually liked it; the others all reacted with something between dismay and active disgust. I actually dumped a guy once on the theory that I'd rather be single than have crotch stubble, but is this going to be a trend in my love life? I should add that I'm 19 and I don't think some of these boys have seen pubic hair before; also, I'm of the hairy-legged feminist variety but since I'm very blonde, guys tend not to notice the legs or underarms.

Love, Goldilocks

Dear Locks:

"Dear Andrea: Am I being selfish to want to not cut my legs off? The guy I'm with is really disgusted by legs, but I don't really want to cut them off..."

Yes, I exaggerate but, geez. No, you are not being selfish. Not by keeping your body hair, growing or cutting your head hair, wearing or not wearing make-up, being slim or getting fat.... The phrase "It's your body" may be

trim and then tell any guy who complains about what's left that he should be so lucky and to get lost. Either that, or you could move. What's de rigueur in SoCal or Miami is still just for porn stars in Des Moines. Or so I hear.

If you do decide to shave, there are ways to minimize the discomfort: clip everything very short and use a very sharp razor, avoid scented soaps and complicated lotions and exfoliate like mad. This won't work for everyone, of course, and it certainly won't work for you if you really don't want to do it. If you don't want to, just say no. I doubt you needed me to tell you this, but hey, it's my job.

All of this reminds me of a column I once wrote about a woman who was really turned off by the idea of shaving or even trimming and wondered why the porn girls were uniformly shaved and why the guys liked it. I felt for her, I really did, but my own aesthetic prejudices took hold of me and forced me to write this:

I recently saw a meant-to-be-amusing video reel of '70s porn highlights, and, ick. The unshaved, untrimmed (and apparently unwashed) actors look like they've glued giant swatches of dank, matted shag carpeting to their crotches, to no good purpose. Besides looking unsavory (To me! I know! Hold those e-mails!), they look, well, obscure. Is that a vulva? Were those balls? They could be hiding anything in there.

And did the readers hold their e-mails? They did not. I took much abuse for siding with the patriarchy, to which I plead not guilty. I don't even like the baldie-pants look; I'm just kind of a neat freak, and those old films were skanky.

There's no delicate way to ask this, but just how hairy are you?

getting a little stale but it really is your body, you know. So the question isn't whether or not you have a right to keep your pubes—they are really, seriously your pubes to do with what you will—it's whether keeping the hair is going to be more trouble than it's worth.

I must admit to being puzzled by the shocked and disgusted boys. I know that shaving is all the rage these days, but I'll just have to assume that these dudes, being maybe 19 or 20 themselves, haven't gotten around all that much. You are a learning experience for them. Lucky you.

There's no delicate way to ask this, but just how hairy are you? I'm going to guess that, being a blonde and all, you're not sporting the "a muskrat crawled into my underpants and died there" look, but maybe a compromise is in order? Your social group is clearly pube-negative. So is mine, by the way; I was at a hot tub party this weekend and it was all landing strips or smaller—no luxuriant crotch-locks to be seen. So maybe do a tidy little

Of course, I also heard from one thoughtful writer who had considered the options and decided to trim. She was still a little weirded out by her new look, but she concluded, accurately, "Hey, it's only hair." She was, of course, my original correspondent, the one who felt strongly enough about not shaving to write to a columnist about it.

Fashions change, and we change with them. If we don't want to, we sure as hell don't have to, and I would be the first to defend your right to stick to your style. Fashions also tend to come full circle eventually, but I've got to admit that while bell-bottoms, platforms and blue eye shadow have all made reappearances, I haven't seen the giant pubic bathrug making a comeback, and I wouldn't stake my love life on it becoming chic again anytime soon.

Love, Andrea @

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.

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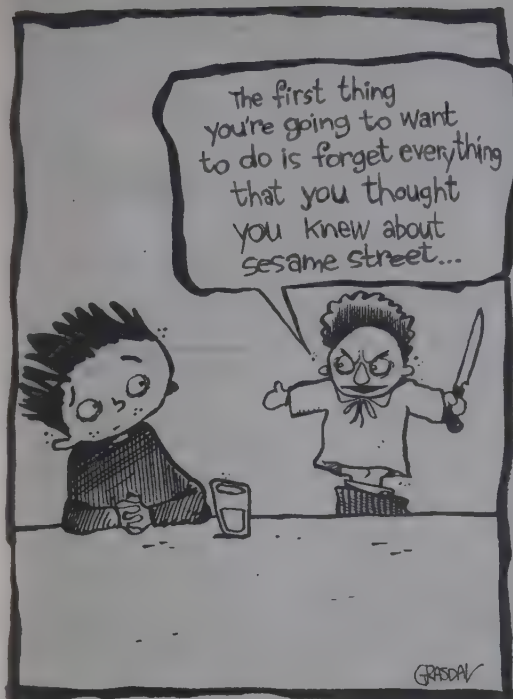
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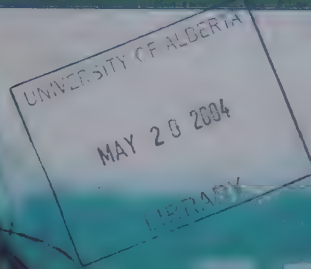
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**THE
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- 25-27

CAROLYN MARK

**WHY EVERYBODY
WANTS TO BE
HER NEW BEST FRIEND**
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Singer/songwriter Carolyn Mark may bill herself as a *Terrible Hostess*, but she doesn't seem to have any trouble making pals wherever she goes—her new disc, *The Pros and Cons of Collaboration* is credited to "Carolyn Mark and Her New Best Friends" and if there's any justice in the world, this collection of wry, funny, hungover songs will make her the superstar she deserves to be • 39



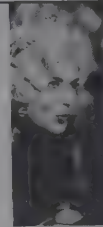
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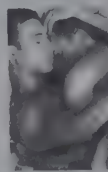
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three
dollar
bill

BY RICHARD BURNETT

The road to Kandahar

I've backpacked and slept my way around the world. I've awoken in jungles, deserts and on beaches. I've always paid my own way, but once in a blue moon I'll accept an offer to join a press junket, which is how I met travel writer and author Michael T. Luongo some years ago.

Luongo—who has slept his way around considerably more of the world than I have—is the editor of the just-published book *Between the Palms: A Collection of Gay Travel Erotica* (Har-

rington Park Press) which features fun writing and acute observations of other cultures, notably by my friend and LA-based gay-lit icon Felice Picano. "But some major [American gay] publications can't get past the word 'erotica,'" Luongo says. "It's weird gay magazines can't and straight ones can. They understand that sex is a good way to connect with the world."

"I've travelled throughout the Arab world during this war," he continues, "and I'm really worried about what Bush is doing. I've been hugged and kissed by Iraqis, shared Ramadan dinner with them. But I think it will only be easier [for Americans] to travel when we finally lose our empire."

Luongo says it isn't just George Dubya who's ruining America's good name overseas. "Tourists overseas [also] believe Americans don't communicate well sexually," he says. "Some say, 'Don't go to Mykonos because there are too many Americans.' In contrast, anywhere the French touch is wonderfully sexy, whether it's Haiti, Morocco or Montreal. There is something about

the French—they don't have the hang-ups the English do when it comes to sex. Look at India: it was a sexual paradise until the English got there, whereas former French colonies have a better time with sex and HIV education."

Luongo's favourite destination remains South America, especially Buenos Aires. One night in Iquitos, Peru, Luongo says he even stumbled across some drag shows. "They are well paid and make a good living," he reports. "I didn't expect it because it was in the middle of nowhere. But a lot of these remote tourist destinations have gays and lesbians because the travel industry disproportionately attracts gay people."

Luongo believes a Western-style gay liberation movement will make inroads worldwide. "I've kissed men on the street in South Africa," he says. "In Peru one man told me, 'This is not America.' But he still kissed me. Same thing in Uruguay. In Havana I hung out with this 32-year-old man who had no idea what the Rainbow meant and had

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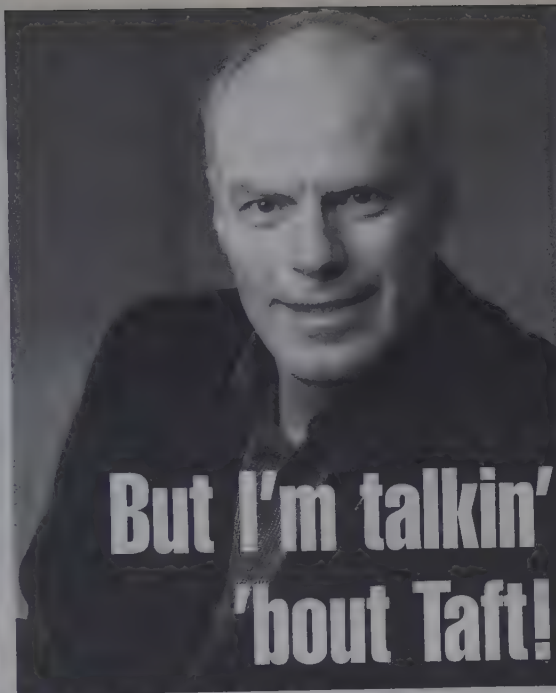
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Kevin Taft on Klein, Tory secrecy and his optimism about the upcoming election

By CHRIS BOUTET

There once was a time when Edmonton Riverview MLA and Alberta Liberal leader Kevin Taft felt, as many Albertans do, that politics was a job for "other people." Sure, it's interesting enough to watch, but getting actively involved seemed prohibitively difficult—after all, aside from helping a few friends with their nomination campaigns, Taft had no experience as a politician. But after watching the Alberta government make what he felt were a series of terrible policy decisions throughout the '90s, Taft's frustration grew, and with it a belief that he could do better.

Surprisingly, that was but three short years ago. Despite his rookie status, Taft ran for and won a seat in his riding in 2001, and when former party leader Ken Nicol announced he was leaving to get into federal politics this January, Taft (then the party's health critic) was elected to lead the province's Official Opposition out of obscurity.

Over the course of three provincial elections, the situation had become increasingly dire for Alberta's oldest political party; the Liberals' grip on power had been weakened substantially, having plummeted from a respectable 32 seats in the 83-seat house in 1993 to a paltry seven in 2001. Clearly, change was needed. Some called Taft the "pit bull" that the Liberals desperately needed to lead the charge against the Tory government; the Opposition had to have a leader that would grab a mouthful of the premier's pantleg and not let

go until questions were answered.

Today, in the wake of the Legislature's spring session, it seems that the Alberta Liberal Party has found its man: the party is once again in the public eye, and they seem to have the Tories on the run. As such, *Vue Weekly* recently sat down with Taft to discuss his party's recent gains and its plans for the future.

Vue Weekly: Despite a decline in the number of seats the Liberals have held in Alberta over the years, it seems today that your party is enjoying an increased visibility in the public eye. To what do you attribute this resurgence?

Kevin Taft: Well, you know, the party with the longest history in Alberta is the Liberal party. It was the first governing party that Alberta created, and we ran the province from 1905 to 1921. In the early '50s, it was the Liberals challenging the Social Credit party, in the '80s and '90s, it was the Liberals challenging the Conservatives, so although the Tories would have Albertans believe that to be a Liberal is somehow un-Albertan, in fact the Liberals have the longest history of any party in this province. And there is that base of support.

As for today, people are looking for some fresh blood, for some new ideas. There is a genuine sense of fatigue surrounding the Tory party right now; it seems they really don't have any direction, they don't know why they're there, and I think that's contributing to their foul-ups in the Legislature. There's a real sense in Alberta today that the current regime is at the end of its functioning life, and people are looking for an alternative. We've worked very hard in the last couple of months to present that alternative. We've got a long way to go, of course, there's no doubt

about that, but we're on our way up.

VW: Throughout this spring session at the Legislature, the dominant theme of your party's questions towards the Tories has been transparency and accountability. How would you characterize the Tory government in that regard?

KT: It's a very closed system. The Tory government is very good at talking about openness, but very bad at actually delivering. And time and again, as we've dug into this, I've been startled at how much more open the federal government in Ottawa is than the provincial government in Edmonton, which I think is really saying something. The federal government, their cabinet ministers and all their senior staff all post their detailed expenses on the website within three months, but in Alberta the executive council has exempted itself from that kind of accountability.

So I think this is a big concern. For democracy to work well, the public needs to be informed, we need to have open discussion—without that, it's all just a sham. To ensure that taxpayer's money is properly spent, we need to know the details, the public needs to know, but if everything is hidden behind a wall of secrecy, there's no way of knowing what's going on.

VW: So why do you think that that wall of secrecy is there?

KT: My concern is that there are things going on that the provincial government doesn't want its constituents to know. There's no lobbyist registry in Alberta, which exists on the federal level and in most of the provinces, so we don't know who's talking to the provincial government, what they're asking for; we don't know whose interests this government is serving. I suspect that they're serving interests other than the public's.

The ongoing drive to privatize healthcare, it's not about containing costs, it's not about better service, it's about allowing certain people to cash in on healthcare dollars. And that approach plays out over and over again. Electricity deregulation, for example. Who benefited from that? Not the ordinary Albertan. Deregulation drained a staggering amount of money out of the taxpayer's pocket,

but who got it? How will we ever know? Why is this government not undertaking the same market investigations that we're seeing in California and Ontario and Montana? There's just so many questionable activities undertaken by this government that I'm not surprised that they want to hide behind a wall of secrecy.

VW: You mentioned a general sense of fatigue amongst the Conservative party; I know this is a touchy question to answer, but do you think that fatigue alone can explain Premier Klein's behaviour of late?

KT: Well, I don't want to get into a personal attack on the premier, but I can tell you that it's a very high-pressure job, it's a demanding job. You look at Ralph Klein, his career is as a politician. He's been in politics since 1980, so now 24 years, 12 of which he's been the premier. So there's a bit of a burnout factor that I think is

inevitable—you live in that pressure cooker for that long, sooner or later it's going to start to take a toll.

VW: What would the Liberal Party bring to Alberta if you were to win in the upcoming provincial election?

KT: We would bring a shot of new energy to this province; it would be like opening a window wide and letting a fresh breeze into a stale room. We'd like to bring in democratic reform, open everything up to the public; we'd take a hard look at proportional representation—the list could go on and on, there are just so many important changes that need to be made. Public auto insurance, a genuine commitment to education, a genuine commitment to public healthcare: these are just a handful of the areas that we'd like to take a look at.

One really fundamental concern I have as an Albertan is that we are just burning through our remarkable wealth in this province. There is no piece of real estate on this planet as wealthy as Alberta: we have forestry, agriculture, tourism, we've got a hard-working, well-educated workforce, we have peace and security that we take for granted. And on top of all that, we live next door to the biggest market in the world, and we have petroleum reserves that rival Saudi Arabia. And we're just smoking through this wealth that we have like there's no tomorrow. So we have to figure out as a society, how are we going to turn that non-renewable wealth into a permanent source of wealth? If we don't figure that out, then we're on our way to being like the state lottery winner who ends up in the gutter three years later.

VW: How do you like your party's chances?

KT: Well, we're going to bust our butts, run the best campaign we can and find the best candidates. I really like our chances over the next two elections. We're going to drive hard at the next election, but realistically, as things stand now, I think we're two elections away from a majority government. But a week is a long time in politics and I'm liking our chances more and more. This spring session at the Legislature was not a good one for the Tories, not a good one for the premier, and it was a very good one for us. We have momentum, our membership is growing rapidly, we've got some good people, and so our chances are looking better and better.

VW: To what extent do you think that the current controversy surrounding the federal Liberals affects the public perception of the provincial Liberal parties?

KT: That's a concern for us; I won't pretend it isn't. It's frustrating for us because there are no particular ties between the parties, but when good things happen to the federal Liberals it tends to reflect well on us, and bad things happen to them, it does cause us problems. It's something we have to manage and live with, but you know what? The Liberal brand in Alberta has such a rich history. As I said, they were the first provincial government, they created the University of Alberta—so many pillars of Albertan society were put in place by the Liberal party. And we're proud of that. ●

HEALTH

Romanow remains doubtful of Liberal healthcare policy

Clearly, one of the biggest issues surrounding the upcoming federal election will be the future of healthcare in Canada. So far, amidst much grumbling from the provinces, Martin has gone to great lengths to assure that the federal government will do its best to maintain our current socialized system. But these assurances have not done much to quell the doubts held by Ray Romanow, author of the controversial Romanow report on healthcare, who took the stage at a health conference in Winnipeg earlier this week to voice concerns that the Liberals aren't promising enough.

According to a report in the *Globe and Mail*, the Liberal government had hoped that Romanow's speech would be an endorsement for the party's commitment to healthcare; instead Romanow stated that while the prime minister has been making speeches that are in line with his Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada, neither Martin nor his opponents have come out and specifically said that the federal government will stay away from a private, for-profit delivery system after the next election.

"What [Martin] has said so far sounds good, but keep in mind that the devil's always in the details and very often the devil comes out in the details after elections," Romanow was reported as saying. "The fundamental choice is public delivery versus private delivery, but there are many other aspects to this whole issue: what do you do with waiting lists, what do you do with home care, what do you do with catastrophic drug care, what would be the model of the program, how much would it cost, to whom would it apply, what do you do about population health, what do you do with primary health reform? These are the things that should be explained to the Canadian public."

In 2001, the Liberals under Chrétien appointed Romanow, then health commissioner, to draft a document that would examine the current status of healthcare in Canada and suggest a future course of action. An interim report was tabled at the House of Commons in February 2002; in it, Romanow's commission outlined what Canadians felt should be the goals of the healthcare system and offered recommendations as to how they could best be achieved. Romanow said that Canadians consider medicare to be the "defining aspect of their citizenship," and felt that all Canadians should have reasonable access to quality care regardless of location or income, individuals should not have to choose between bankruptcy and proper care, any reform should not come at the expense of the poor or vulnerable, and that the federal government has an important role in the

maintenance of the system.

To achieve these goals, Romanow recommended four radically different approaches: more public investment through increased taxes (well, maybe not that radical), more user-pay fees to act as a deterrent for abuse, an increase in "public choice" (as in the introduction of for-profit care facilities), and a total reorganization of the delivery system. While the report's suggestion for the inclusion of a user-pay structure was a major departure from the current medicare system and raised a few eyebrows, the Romanow report soon became the lesser of two evils when compared to the more hardline Mazankowski healthcare report commissioned by the Alberta government, which called the current system a failure and recommended a total dismantling.

While Romanow has heard support for his guidelines from all the major parties, he said that he was concerned by the lack of specific details being offered, which to him suggested that the federal parties intended one thing but were saying another. As such, Romanow has been calling for a televised public debate on health between the major parties, but so far, Martin has been reluctant to be involved.—CHRIS BOUTET

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Europe's WMD problem remains unaddressed

It's awfully ironic that while the United States and its allies keep looking for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, they continue to ignore a much more impending weapons threat that they've known about for years. Last week, the Russian government reminded G8 nations (us Canadians included) that there remains a very real WMD problem in eastern Europe and implored the group to open up their pocketbooks and make good on a promise to help

that nation dispose of them.

At the 2002 G8 summit in Kananaskis country, the G8 promised to give Russia and other nations \$20 billion (U.S.) over a 10-year period to aid in the costs associated with getting rid of nuclear and chemical weapons. "Under this initiative, we will support specific co-operation projects, initially in Russia, to address non-proliferation, disarmament, counter-terrorism and nuclear safety issues," read a joint statement from the G8 back in 2002. "Among our priority concerns are the destruction of chemical weapons, the dismantling of decommissioned nuclear submarines, the disposition of fissile materials and the employment of former weapons scientists."

But as of 2004, Russia claims it has received only \$100 million of that promised funding—and Russian deputy atomic energy minister Sergei Antipov told Reuters that his nation's fleet of decommissioned nuclear subs and chemical weapons stores not only invite terrorism, but pose grave environmental risks on their own.

"Any of the submarines—and we have 96 waiting to be scrapped—could sink," Antipov told Reuters. "Any of them could rust through or break up. Anything could happen." Antipov added that the G8 should now earmark all of the proposed \$20 billion for Russia, as his nation needs the money not only to disarm the subs, but to address its large store of chemical weapons.—STEVEN SANDOR

ENVIRONMENT

EU flip-flops on GM food ban

Environmentalists were jumping for joy last week over Monsanto's decision to suspend plans to market the world's first strain of genetically modified wheat. But an unexpected about-face by the European Union on GM foods may reveal all that jumping to have been a bit premature.

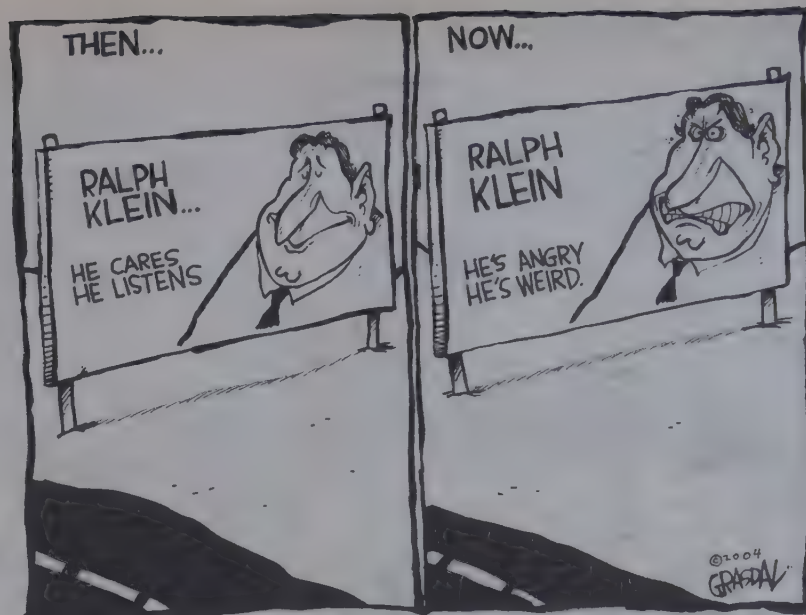
Last Friday, the EU announced that it would lift the moratorium on the

selling of GM modified food that was a major factor in Monsanto's decision to scrap its wheat. The move will open the door for the EU to approve an application by Syngenta, a Swiss-based firm, to sell GM sweet corn throughout the continent.

Because of new food-labeling policies that went into effect earlier this year in the 25-nation EU, opponents of the GM ban—notably Italy, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ireland, Sweden and Finland—felt that European consumers no longer needed the protection of an outright ban on GM foods. "I would imagine that, once these foods are authorized, they will be able to go on the market," David Byrne, the EU's head of food safety, told the Associated Press. "And I expect under those circumstances the member states will respect the laws of the European Union."

Both the United States and Canada had filed official complaints in the past with the WTO over the ban. When a vote to lift the moratorium was held, France, Portugal, Austria, Luxembourg, Greece and Denmark continued their strong support of the GM ban. But thanks to the large number of member countries that abstained from the vote, they could not garner enough support to keep the ban in place.

"In 2002, WTO members raised more bilateral issues than ever before," stated Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in the federal government's latest Canadian Biotechnology Strategy report. "Canada introduced 13 bilateral issues, including the European Union's moratorium on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and China's regulations governing GMOs." According to this report, Canada has over 400 biotech firms doing business—second only to the United States and the United Kingdom. So while the anti-GM movement is agitated about the EU flip-flop, Canada's traders will likely see this as the first step to opening a new lucrative market to GM products.—STEVEN SANDOR



By CHRIS BOUTET

Another Klein mess we've gotten ourselves into

You know, I could hardly be considered a Klein sympathizer, but I have to admit that I feel a little sorry for the guy these days. In just a few short weeks, he's managed to go from being the guy who could be counted on to defuse any negative political situation to being the one who's dropping the bombs; clearly, this has been more than an unfortunate sequence of events that just happened to occur in quick succession. These are the signs of a man who has become exhausted and beat down, the death rattles of someone who is preparing to shuffle off this political coil.

That said, I suppose it's pretty obvious why the Alberta public has once again rallied around him. After all, as all good Oilers fans know, it's easy to cheer for the underdog. When Klein was in his top form, he was pompous, dismissive and condescending; he was just too high and mighty to like, too much of a politician. But now, in the wake of a blowup on Liberal House leader Laurie Blakeman and a bizarre reference to the benevolence of a certain Chilean dictator, it's become clear that Ralph is indeed human. He starts talking before he stops thinking. He fucks up. And when he does, he fucks up big. People like seeing that. Just look at Bush.

But on top of all this, just when it seemed that Klein's situation couldn't get any worse, his attempt to put the Pinochet issue to rest by tabling an essay he wrote for a college course blew up in his face. Plagiarized—but not just plagiarized, plagiarized in a way so stupid and unthinking that even the freshest of freshmen possesses enough sentience to know that they might be doing something wrong.

Of course, the premier has just thrown up his hands and said we should be focusing on more important issues, but you gotta admit the issue has raised myriad questions: what kind of professor would give that paper a passing grade? Will the college be consistent and expel Klein? Why won't the premier apologize for his intellectual theft? And finally, while we feel sorry for the guy, just what the hell will it take for us to finally admit to ourselves that maybe, just maybe, we deserve better leadership? So far, it doesn't seem likely that this will ever happen. And every time we let Klein off the hook, the less accountable he's going to feel.

To err is indeed human. But sadly, in the public's eyes, to be consistently and unapologetically wrong is apparently divine. ●

For love of the Flames

Why has Calgary's pursuit of the Stanley Cup fired Edmonton's imagination?

By JOEL CHURY

Don't forget to stop by Krispy Kreme during your trip to Calgary, you Edmonton turncoats. Is that really all it took for us to set our differences aside? A couple of playoff series wins and suddenly your sworn enemies from southern Alberta are catching your collective eye, to the extent that 60 per cent of you are now supporting the Calgary Flames? You traitors.

Nah, I'm just messing with ya.

As a longtime Flames fan, let me be the first to say welcome to the team, Edmonton.

Without an Oilers postseason to call their own, some Edmonton hockey fans have begun to embrace the flaming C, and the support is coming in many forms, from local bars avoiding the usual custom of drowning out the sound on Flames games with crappy music to calls of support to the Team 1260's *Total Sports* show hosted by Bob Stauffer. "I think the smart [fans] recognize that it is no longer the 'Battle of Alberta,'" says Stauffer. "I think both cities recognize the importance of success for what was once a bitter rivalry: Edmonton needs Calgary, and Calgary needs Edmonton in the NHL."

Geez, Bob. Say it ain't so.

Edmonton doesn't need Calgary, does it? Aside from the occasional pilgrimage to western Canada's only Krispy Kreme or a road trip to yet another big concert that inexplicably skipped the City of Champions, none of Edmontonians' needs should have to be satisfied by Cal-

OPINION

gary, right? Still, it's undeniable that those pesky giant-killing Flames have managed captured some imaginations here in the capital.

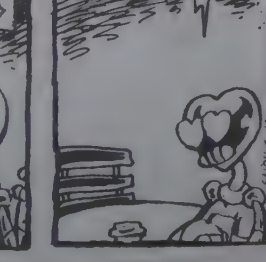
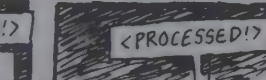
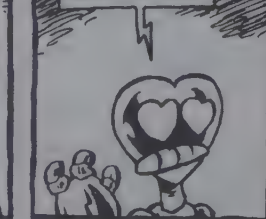
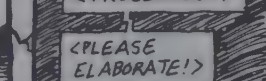
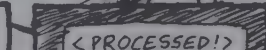
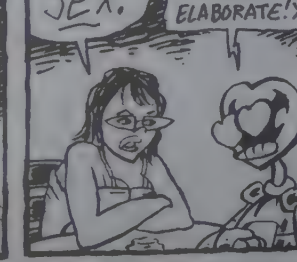
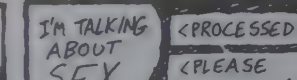
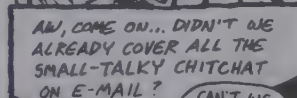
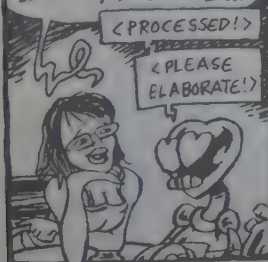
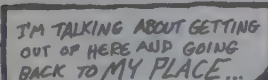
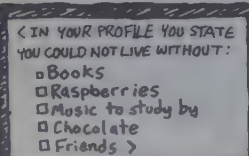
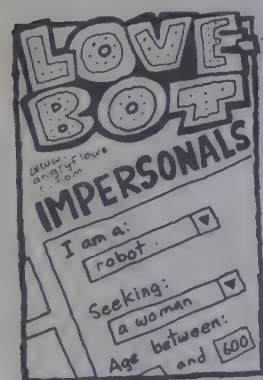
I mean, Flames jerseys? Selling here? The last Edmontonian spotted publicly displaying a flaming "C" around these parts was former mayor Laurence Decore after he'd lost a bet to then-Calgary mayor Ralph Klein in 1986. That's 15 years

sans rouge. Now you can spot miniature Flames flags popping out of Edmonton car windows all the time.

AND WHERE ARE those cars heading? They're headed straight down Highway 2, just like 17-year-old Edmontonian Trevor Beaupre, who stayed with his older brother in Calgary for the end of the Flames/Red Wings series. "He wanted to see the party afterwards," says Derek Beaupre, 24. After moving to Calgary two years ago, the former Oilers fan found himself inside the bubble, but he's since softened his stance on the Flames, admitting he's enjoyed the recent run. "It's nice for [Trevor] to see this, since this city is much rowdier at this stage. Calgary is really partying, as Edmonton would have if the Oilers had come this far. Though, I don't think that Edmon-

ton would be as passive," adds Beaupre, alluding to Edmonton's Canada Day riot three years ago.

Of course, if the Flames eventually do lose out, Edmonton hearts probably won't be too badly broken. Who's kidding who? Though names like Commodore and Montador have now been introduced into Edmonton water-cooler conversations, the worst-case scenario isn't a Flames loss but a lengthy NHL lockout leaving us with months in which to dwell upon this year's lack of an Oilers postseason. On the bright side, they can also look forward to a reformed NHL, where small markets like Edmonton and Calgary can compete. But if you do head down to Cowtown anytime soon, you could at the very least bring your friends back some doughnuts. ☺



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ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)
They say money is
The root of all evil, but
I think it's ginger



LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)
It takes a big man
To admit he was wrong and
The weasels were mad



TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)
You should stop burning
The candle at both ends; just
Read the instructions



SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)
God heard your prayers
And he has damned the table
You stubbed your toe on



GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)
I've said it before
And I will say it again:
I've said it before



SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)
Life is more fun now
That you've stopped worrying and
Started smoking crack



CANCER

(June 21-July 22)
Don't fall for the old
"I'm trapped inside a burning
House and need help" trick



CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)
Don't be afraid to
Make mistakes; you can always
Bury the bodies



LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)
Leprechauns aren't real
Your magical friend is just
Some sort of fairy



AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)
Sometimes you wish that
You had taken the cash, not
The mystery box



VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)
You'll feel better in
The morning, when you have lost
All your self-respect



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Looking back, joining
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Your only option



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Like Luongo, I'm saddened when I bid adieu to friends I may never see again. "I think you always hold that person in your heart," he says, "though now you can still stay in touch via e-mail. But if you're sad to leave, it shows how wonderfully and deeply connected you were making love in that city."

He pauses, then adds, "Canadians and Canada are a gentler, kinder America. They champion the values America once did. As a person who travels [five months each year], it shocks me how isolated [gay Americans] are. All they want to talk about are five-star hotels and spas. No wonder people dislike us." ●

never read a gay magazine. So I gave him one. He was fascinated that in New York and Montreal you have 800,000 people walking down the street during Pride. So despite issues of neo-colonialism, we are planting a seed."

Nothing used to symbolize the global gay movement quite like the Gay Games, which Montreal was supposed to host in 2006. The Federation of Gay Games revoked the games after Montreal refused to surrender financial control and awarded them to Chicago instead. Montreal will now host the first-ever World Outgames in 2006, sanctioned by the brand-new Gay and Lesbian International Sport Association.

I ask Luongo to name his top five gay cities (not including his native New York City). "Buenos Aires," he replies. "Paris is a wonderful, wonderful city. I really love Montreal—it's not Toronto. Los Angeles is brainless but fun. And I recommend São Paulo over Rio because there's a higher level of Brazilian partying."

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This dog won't hunt

Prolific Ruth Rendell hasn't learned any new tricks in *The Rottweiler*

By BRIAN GIBSON

You can tell the stature of a writer from the size of their font. And British crime writer Ruth Rendell is a big-name writer, so prolific that she's written 20 popular Inspector Wexford novels, 36 other mysteries (some as Barbara Vine) and dozens of short stories in the last 40 years. So above *The Rottweiler* is Rendell's name in large scarlet type, standing out on the dust-jacket cover against a blackening street running away into a blood-red dusk below ghostly streetlamps. Inside, the story shimmies and weaves its way along a well-plotted, thrilling route, but the writing remains drably pedestrian. *The Rottweiler* is a fun summer read you'll never have to dog your way through, but in the end, it seems a bit toothless.

"The Rottweiler" is what the London tabloids have dubbed a killer of women who is stealing a single personal item from each of his victims. The novel's premise, especially as it unfolds in the first hundred pages, is enticing—the killer's serial murders are seen through the eyes of a polyglot web of people in a north London street centred around Star Antiques. Widow Inez Ferry's shop, which she runs with the help of comely assistant Zeinab, lies beneath three apartments which Inez rents out to Jeremy Quick, Will Cobbett and Ludmila Gogol.

But everyone seems to be hiding something: Zeinab is leading on two different suitors while keeping her home life shadowy, Jeremy's stories about a girlfriend don't ring true to Inez, while Will, hampered by learning difficulties, is obsessed with

moving in with his aunt Becky; Ludmila's accent seems fake, and her boyfriend Freddy Perfect is a welfare defrauder. And when Star Antiques becomes linked to the Rottweiler, the police investigation focusses on Inez and her mysterious tenants.

For the first third of the book, Rendell keeps these various storylines taut, untangling them slowly, slipping in extraneous (or are they?) details

REVUE BOOKS

about each character's life, slipping from one viewpoint to another as she slots the pieces of the Star Street neighbourhood mosaic into place. Inez's abiding grief is concisely evoked, while Freddy Perfect's mannerisms come alive in his dialogue.

BUT THEN the Rottweiler's identity is revealed and the story moves from whodunit to whydunit, lagging as the Jekyll-and-Hyde split-personality



killer begins to reflect on his motives, while Inez ponders the truth about other characters whose true natures have already been revealed to us.

Thankfully, though, Rendell throws a vicious wrench into the works with some burglary, blackmail and plenty more deceit, rushing the reader towards the climax.

A deft plotter (though a map of the neighbourhood would help a non-London reader make better sense of the labyrinthine setting), Rendell also tosses some ideas into her heady mix of masks, mayhem and murder. Amongst themes of gossip, guilt and the usual British class problems comes the old moral that appearances can be deceiving. From Zeinab's rapacious beauty to Will, whose good looks hides a simple mind, Rendell exposes people's grasping, pathetic slavishness to the power of appearances.

But the nitty-gritty of real London life, of people's idiosyncrasies and contradictions, is never flecked throughout the pages because Rendell's prose style lacks bite. Sentences lack flair or distinction. From her stilted rendering of the cliché about strange things happening ("Instances of incongruous behaviour were always occurring in his life recently") to Rendell's banal rendition of yet another old chestnut—"It was as if the icy spray from a shower head where there is only cold water had hit him with a nasty shock"—the story can't fully overcome such an uninspired telling.

A SMATTERING OF TYPOS throughout the book doesn't help either, including a minor figure who's initially given the wrong name. Will remains too simplistic a character, and the constant comparisons of him to a child become gratingly condescending, while his aunt, fraught with guilt and selfishness, is reduced to finding solace in alcohol. There's not enough realistic give-and-take or conflict to characters' conversations, while the cops seem rather Keystone, bumbling from one false lead to another and inexplicably never keeping watch on Inez's store.

Still, while Rendell never delves

much into the Rottweiler's psyche, the lurid, Freudian reason for his bloodlust is rather convincing, and the plot provides enough tension and detail to keep you reading relentlessly on while flicking back here and there to reread the bits that revealed much more than you realized at the time. There's almost

enough snooping, sneaking and gossip on Rendell's twisted Coronation Street to make the otherwise dull, awkward visit to the not-so-friendly neighbourhood worthwhile. ●

THE ROTTWEILER

By Ruth Rendell • Doubleday • 342 pp. • \$37.95

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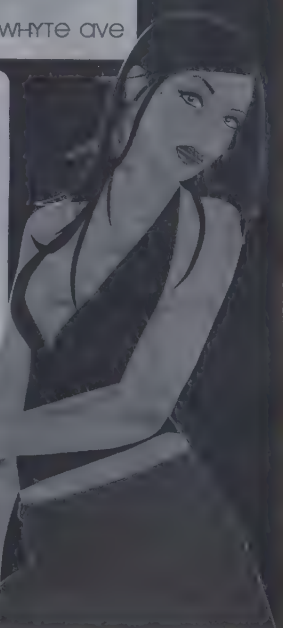
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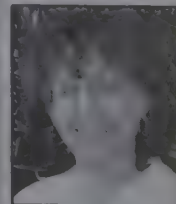
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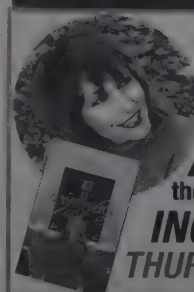
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Stanzas and suplexes

Toronto poet and scholar Michael Holmes dedicates himself to the grappler's art

By STEVEN SANDOR

There is no doubt that Canada's literary community—which takes itself far too seriously—will, for the most part, bristle at the release of *Parts Unknown*, the new collection of verse from Toronto poet, author and critic Michael Holmes. It's not that Holmes doesn't have an impressive résumé; in fact, he's released three well-received poetry collections and penned *Watermelon Row*, a novel that took a hard look at the aggressive streets of Toronto.

No, their problem may be the subject of Holmes's latest collection. And that's professional wrestling.

Ever since his dad turned him onto wrestling (the untitled poem that opens the book is an ode to how wrestling became the bond that united father and son), Holmes has been addicted to the sport. Tell him all wrestling is fake, and he'll point to the large number of pro wrestlers who have been badly hurt or even killed in the ring. He'll dare you to name any other kind of pro

athlete who is willing to take an "anything goes" policy when it comes to his body and health, all in the name of putting a smile on a fan's face. Would Wayne Gretzky allow himself to be atomic dropped through the Spanish announcer's table? No. Would Michael Jordan allow his forehead to be sliced open by a chair? Nah. But for pro wrestlers, who are morphed into epic heroes by Holmes's verse, it's all par for the course.

The poems in *Parts Unknown* cel-

PROFILE POETRY

brate larger-than-life heroes such as Chris Jericho ("The Walls of Jericho") and Scotty Too Hotty ("The Godlike Genius of Scotty Too Hotty"), place celebrity wrestlers in everyday situations (like Rob Van Damme taking in a movie, or sexpot Trish Stratus going to class at York University, where Holmes spent time as a T.A.) and lament the tragedy of wrestlers' lives gone wrong (such as the Harts, Canada's first family of wrestling, who lost son Owen when a stunt in Kansas City's Kemper Arena went horribly wrong).

And if the literary community dumps on him for dedicating a body of work to wrestling, Holmes really doesn't care. "I think part of the fun is taking the piss out of the literary

community," Holmes says. "I wanted to be serious about something that is looked upon by highbrow culture as the ultimate lowbrow pastime.... The best literature is engaged with contemporary culture. It engages with what real people do."

AND IT'S NOT LIKE Holmes only sees wrestlers from a distance. He spent time with Stu Hart, the late wrestling patriarch whose Calgary "dungeon" was the training ground for every major Canadian wrestler of note, from Jericho to current World Wrestling champ and Edmonton native Chris Benoit to Hart's own kids.

"I got to go to the dungeon, so I totally narked out as a fan," says Holmes. "I got to meet Davey Boy Smith before he died and wrestlers like Jim 'The Anvil' Niedhart. There were so many wrestlers from the '40s and '50s there. And they all paid homage to Stu. He was like a god sitting in a chair, and I realized not only how important a figure he was in wrestling, but in the city of Calgary and in Canada as well."

He also speaks regularly with famed manager Jimmy "The Mouth of the South" Hart and Jake "The Snake" Roberts, making plans to help compile their memoirs. He admits that Roberts's penchant for self-destructive behaviour scares him, and he fears for him as a friend. The excellent 1999 documen-

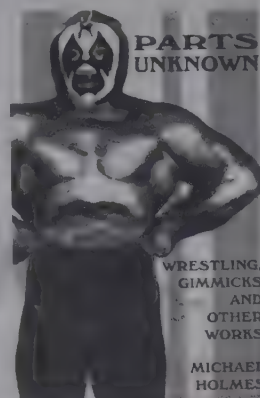
tary *Beyond the Mat* shows how Roberts descended into a personal hell of substance abuse—and his story is a prime example of the way

no longer pushed to offer a better product, and has suffered a drop in popularity as a result. But Holmes feels a grappling renaissance is at hand: New rival circuits are springing up in opposition to McMahon's empire, and WWE has decided to go with a storyline that gives the belt to Benoit, a prairie boy who is not flashy in any sense, over the larger-than-life characters who have recently sat atop the wrestling heap.

"The business is cyclical," Holmes says. "I'm kind of excited about wrestling right now. The industry has suffered a downturn over the past couple of years, but with Benoit's success I think wrestling has shown it has got over its size fetish and will reward wrestlers who are known to be great technical wrestlers and have a good work ethic."

Holmes says he has about 40 more poems about wrestling on the shelf; they were placed there through the editing process, and Holmes feels they need more work before they're ready for mass consumption. But he's also pretty upbeat about the idea of doing another wrestling collection. The literary highbrows can consider themselves warned. ☉

PARTS UNKNOWN: WRESTLING, GIMMICKS AND OTHER WORKS
By Michael Holmes • Insomniac Press • 84 pp. • \$11.95



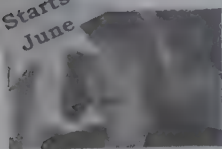
the business throws its stars aside once they're through.

WRESTLING HAS BEEN in a state of flux since WWE magnate purchased World Championship Wrestling from Ted Turner, swallowing up his major rival and giving the WWE a monopoly on the sport. Without competition from WCW, WWE was

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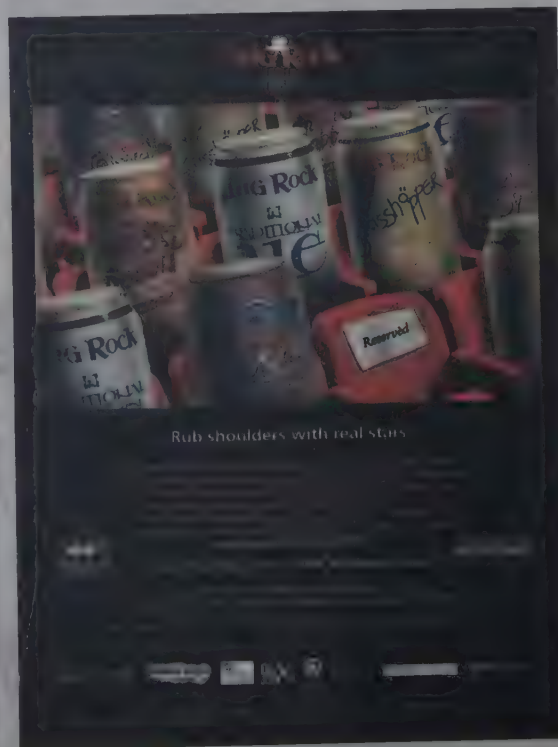
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print
culture

By CHRISTOPHER WIEBE

Rushed into print

Months ago, when the spotlight of "fiscal scrutiny" was on Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson's trip to Russia and Scandinavia, I remember Margaret Wente of the *Globe and Mail* questioning her insistence on "the North" as a central feature of Canadian identity. An interesting point, given that few Canadians have ever crossed the 60th parallel. And yet, the North undeniably persists in our collective unconscious. Two new books with very different complexions look at how the human and natural history of the North continues to resonate in the present.

John Firth's *River Time: Racing the Ghosts of the Klondike Rush* (NeWest) is a superb, Chatwin-esque amalgam of travel/adventure writing, memoir and regional history. Firth, a lifelong Yukon resident, uses his participation in the 1997 race along the Klondike trail from Dyea, Alaska to

"The Yukon River," Firth writes in his concluding chapter, "is the living thread that binds the ends of the century together. A 600-mile-long-museum populated by ghosts." Most vestiges of human history in the Canadian West and North are gathered along the banks of rivers, making projects like the Oldman River Dam all the more tragic. It delights me to learn that Myrna Kostash is hard at work on a book collecting the stories that have caught in the eddies and snagged the sweepers of the North Saskatchewan River.

Eighteenth-Century Naturalists of Hudson Bay (McGill-Queen's) by Stuart Houston, Tim Ball and Mary Houston, is the first book to examine the contributions of eight Hudson's Bay Company fur traders who did some of the first natural history work in North America. By gathering plant and animal specimens for European collectors, these traders cum reluctant naturalists did work of signal importance to scientists like Carolus von Linnaeus (who revolutionized the classification of plants and animals) yet received almost no recognition for their work. This new book also explores the meteorological records kept at the HBC forts at Churchill and York Factory. These records, in excess of 200 years in length, are the longest series of weather observations in the world, and as weather specialist Ball explains, can be of profound use in our era of drastic climate change.

"The Yukon River," Firth writes in his concluding chapter, "is the living thread that binds the ends of the century together. A 600-mile-long-museum populated by ghosts."

Dawson City, Yukon as a narrative spine for his exploration of the human histories left along the route, including his grandfather's own "Rush" in 1897. The Klondike stampede, Firth argues, was not so much about the promise of gold as the hope that "Rushing" embodied after the catastrophic economic collapse of 1893.

A careful observer of geography and his fellow racers, Firth details the extremely difficult nature of the Klondike Trail. The iconic "Golden Stairs" of the Chilkoot Trail was only the beginning of a 600-mile route over mostly rivers and lakes. There was the wind on Bennet Lake, the storms that would brew up on Lac Laberge (on whose marge Sam McGee was cremated), the Thirty Mile which steamship captains called the most treacherous piece of river in the world, and the Yukon River's Five Finger Rapids. Firth navigated the route in a little over eight days. That 40,000 Klondikers with their slapdash equipment made it at all is miraculous.

River Time gives us a uniquely valuable view from the ground of the remote Klondike as lived experience, and not another sutured mass of archival sources. Firth relishes temporal shifts in his writing, going so far as to imaginatively reconstruct his grandfather's lost letters, but he wisely refrains from overly theorizing what it means to "relive" or "recreate" the past. Of no less value is Firth's retrieval of the lost histories of communities like Fort Selkirk that were turned into virtual ghost towns overnight when the paddle steamers stopped running in the 1950s, as well as the story of the forced relocation of many Dawson City residents to Whitehorse in 1953.

Many of the Hudson Bay naturalists were surgeons—the medical men of education at the posts—but the first, Alexander Light, was a shipwright and explorer. In the 1730s and 1740s he was asked by the HBC (many of whose board members and shareholders were members of the Royal Society) to collect and prepare specimens of many plants and mammals, such as the American porcupine. Other naturalists included Samuel Hearne and Peter Fidler, with the unsung Thomas Hutchins making perhaps the greatest contribution in specimen collection and developing the idea of bird migration. As it turned out, Hudson Bay posts were second only to Charleston, South Carolina as a source of data for Linnaeus.

Written with uncommon zest, *Eighteenth-Century Naturalists* is kitted out with plenty of scholarly trappings—including intriguing appendices on the swan skin trade and 10-year lynx cycles, exhaustive notes and bibliographical materials—yet holds the attention of the lay reader by organizing itself around the lives of the HBC naturalists rather than using their biographies as mere handmaids to the book's intellectual concerns.

Readers digest

In a run up to Women's Writing Week in June, there will be two readings at Audreys Books: Vancouver writer Carmen Rodriguez on Friday, May 21 at 7:30, and Kate Braid from Nanaimo, B.C. on Friday, June 4 at 7:30. Elsewhere, on Thursday May 27 at 7:30 at Laurie Greenwood's Volume II, actor/playwright/novelist Darren O'Donnell reads from his first novel *You Secrets Sleep With Me* (Coach House). ●

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Not even ridiculously hellish temperatures could keep me from Coachella

By NIK KOZUB

Apparently being a pale, skinny, indie rock kid from Edmonton has not provided me with much of a natural defense against a blaring desert sun. Lesson learned. It became pretty obvious early in our adventure that my Coachella crew (Jered Stuffco, Dan Carlyle and Jason Troock) and I were not native Californians. Locals strolled around the festival in jeans and black T-shirts showing no signs of discomfort, while we were all about ready to collapse from heat exhaustion in our shorts and cut-off sleeves. Don't get me wrong, though; the heat was an uncomfortable but necessary part of an amazing trip.

Being the obsessive music news buff that I am, I had been watching the lineup for the Coachella Valley Music And Arts Festival grow on their website for some time before tickets actually went on sale. Every day another band that I loved would get added, and every day I would be a little more tempted to make the trip to Indio, California, where the festival is held. Jason and I had talked a little bit about going, but it was always in the way that we had talked about going to Bumbershoot in Seattle; we both knew that there was no way we could actually afford to make the trip a reality. More and more bands got added to the bill, and the lineup began to look like every rough draft of my top 10 bands-I-must-see-before-I-die list.

The night before tickets went on sale, I ran into Jered at Seedy's. It happened that he and Dan had also been watching the lineup grow, and were considering flying out. Over the course of the night we managed to get each other riled up enough to devise a harebrained scheme whereby the four of us would fly to Los Angeles, share the cost of renting a car and drive to the festival together.

The next day I whipped out my credit card and booked my festival tickets and camping pass. Jered, Jason and Dan did the same. Holy crap.

The festival weekend came up quickly. Jered flew into L.A. a day ahead of the rest of us, Jason and I were on the same flight and Dan came in a few hours after us. Our dangerously loose plan was for me and Jason to meet up with Jered at the airport ("Yeah, dude, we'll meet you there.... Oh, wait, this place is huge"), go for Mexican food, return

can food (in California even the crappy taquerias are amazing), cheap bourbon (*really* cheap... as in two dollars a bottle. It seemed like a good idea at the time) and a flat of water. Jered did the driving while I played DJ, blaring an assortment of CDs by Coachella performers through the surprisingly bumbin' stock stereo in our rental car. We were all starting to get really excited for the weekend, the reality of driving towards the desert finally sinking in.

We arrived at the festival site late

hol that we had brought for the weekend and wound up being a little tipsy once it became time to set up our tents. Everyone with a camping pass was allowed to have their own designated plot in the campground, so we of course set up all three of our tents in one plot. It was cozy. We checked out the neighboring campsites, met a few people and eventually stumbled off to bed.

GETTING WOKEN UP by the heat of the sun was a foreign concept to me.

out my ultimate festival itinerary on the plane ride, so as soon as I figured out the lay of the land I was off. The festival layout included two large outdoor stages and three giant tents (the largest of which mostly hosted DJs) spread out over a field normally used for polo. Between the various stages were an assortment of vendors, concessions, a few shaded tents (although it was so hot that they barely helped), some really large art installations, a Tesla coil and a weird robot battlefield. All of this was beautifully framed by palm trees and mountains—quite a surreal sight for an Alberta city boy.

We stumbled from stage to stage checking out a wide assortment of our favourite bands that we never thought we'd get to see. The four of us split up, but there were a lot of things that we were all interested in, so we would cross paths frequently. By 3:30 in the afternoon, we all were walking around in a complete daze. The glaring sun had prolonged our hangovers, we had spent close to \$50 each on bottled water, the shade of the tents provided little solace and all we really wanted was for dusk to fall. Finally things cooled off, and we were able to properly enjoy the first night's headliners (not that we hadn't enjoyed the daytime sets). Exhausted from the days events and the shock of the heat we quickly joined the sea of people leaving the festival grounds and crashed hard in our tents.

DAY TWO was even hotter than Day One, but we all agreed that it was a bit easier to take without a wicked hangover. Apparently on the Sunday temperatures reached 114° Fahrenheit, which converts to "damn hot" in Celsius. We spent the morning wait between our blistering heat alarm clock waking us up and the gates opening by sitting in the shade watching the hygiene-savvy brave the two-hour lineup to use one of three on-site showers.

Once again, I had mapped out an itinerary and knew exactly what I wanted to see. I spent a lot of Sunday

SEE NEXT PAGE

96 degrees in the shade



to the airport to pick up Dan ("Yeah, dude, we'll meet you there...."). Everything went surprisingly smoothly. We arrived, Jered was almost on time and found us right away, we braved the absolutely ludicrous traffic, ate Mexican food at a little place on Sunset Strip, briefly checked out the supermarket-sized Amoeba Records store and returned to pick up Dan. Smooth sailing so far, and we hit the road towards Indio.

THE DRIVE TOOK US a bit longer than it probably should have, due to frequent stops to pick up more Mexi-

can food. There was an unbelievably long lineup to get into the main campground, and we were told that it had been oversold and that most of the people in line would eventually be told to move onto the sec-

TRAVEL

ondary campground. Rather than take our chances, we went straight to campground B and got in the other super-long lineup. While trying to pass the time waiting in line, we wound up drinking most of the alco-

At 7 a.m. I could simply no longer sleep because the heat in my tent was so unbearable. (I was later told that it reached 37 °C by 10 a.m.) All of us crept out from our tents only to attempt to find some kind of shade by, er, crouching next to our tents. We woke up on the Saturday with wicked hangovers from cheap shitty bourbon and killed time until the festival gates opened at 11 a.m. We drank our entire flat of water before the gates even opened.

Once inside the gates, even a nasty hangover couldn't mask my excitement. I had already mapped



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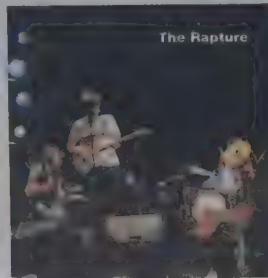
Continued from previous page

with Dan, and we were surprised that we hadn't run into more fellow Edmontonians over the course of the weekend. We knew that a lot of people had made the trip, but there were so many people at the festival and there was so much going on at all times that we bumped into very few familiar faces. I think that overall I enjoyed the second day of the festival more. We at

city, and before we knew it we had met new friends from all over the continent and the sun was coming up. We packed up our stuff, stopped for a Mexican breakfast in Indio (probably the best Mexican food we had all weekend, even if we were too exhausted to really appreciate it) and made our way back to L.A. The rest of the day was spent lounging by the outdoor pool at our Sunset Strip hotel, record shopping and a bit of club hopping. (The Viper Room, by the way, is not all that exciting after



LCD Soundsystem



The Rapture

least knew what to expect from the heat, and Dan and I took the time to relax a bit and sip coconut milk straight from the baby coconuts that one of the concessions was selling.

The day went quickly and once again we found ourselves in front of the mainstage exhausted and ecstatic. Even though our bodies most certainly wanted to be put to rest, we wound up staying up all night in the campground. Various small parties and gatherings abounded in the tent

all.) On Tuesday afternoon, Jason and I flew back to reality as Jared and Dan stayed an extra day to lie around on Venice Beach. Damn.

It was a crazy, hot, expensive trip, but it was well worth it. I can definitely see myself making a return to Coachella next spring provided that the organizers can match this year's stunning lineup. Maybe I'll plan ahead and train by sitting in a sauna with a boombox for a couple weeks beforehand. ☺

Here is a brief overview of the few acts that I actually saw at Coachella (not necessarily in their entirety). Stars denote personal highlights. — Nik Kozus

DAY 1

DJ Icon
Erase Errata*
The Evens
Trail of Dead
Hieroglyphics*
Junior Senior**
Death Cab for Cutie
The Sounds
LCD Soundsystem**
Kinky
The (International) Noise Conspiracy
The Rapture**
Radiohead
Eyedea & Abilities
Living Legends
Kraftwerk**

DAY 2

Pretty Girls Make Graves
!!!**
Broken Social Scene
2 Many Djs**
Belle and Sebastian
Dizzee Rascal**
Air
Prefuse 73
The Flaming Lips**
The Cure**

Bands I Wish I Had Seen, But My Schedule Prevented It: Basement Jaxx, Le Tigre, The Pixies, MF Doom, Moving Units

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Local FDG enthusiasts throw themselves headlong into alternative sport

BY BOBBI BARBARICH

This summer, if you're looking to have fun for the sake of fun or to play a game because games are meant to be played, look no farther than the flying disc golf courses at Rundle Park or at Lilly Lake near Bon Accord.

Like golf, flying disc golf is played in long expanses of grass, and also like golf, the object is to get one thing into another thing—in this case, a disc in a basket instead of a ball in a hole. But that's where the similarities end. For a certain group of Edmontonians, flying disc golf has been affectionately re-termed FDG and turned from a sport into a game—a game with no rules, no signs and sometimes no shirts.

"FDG takes 'golf' out of 'flying disc golf,'" says Dan, a hardcore FDG enthusiast. "On the surface, it's similar to golf. But it's actually the opposite of golf: it's free, one needs no membership card to play, there's no such thing as 'out of bounds' and it never, ever matters how close you are to par. After all, what's the 'worst' thing that happens after a flubbed shot? You get more throws!"

Dan and his cohorts Lisa and Colin valiantly ignore rules, signs, and out-of-bounds markers, and only bring one disc with them for the entire game. "Like with any sport, some people take it *wa-a-a-a* too seriously," says Lisa. "There they are with their multiple discs and their little arse rags to clean the discs and their hands before every shot. Give me a break! For me, it's about deep belly laughs, wide blue skies, sauntering through the woods looking for an errant disc and catching up on the news with friends."

"FDG is not a professional sport," chimes in Colin, "but neither is hockey or baseball. Just because some people play it professionally,

[most] games or sports were initially not professional." Someone has

marketed them, created special gear for them and said they could only be played a certain way—thus creating a "professional" sport.

Lisa thinks it's an aberration to "carve up fun and recreation into competitive sports, which vilify and dehumanize our opponents.... Adults don't play games when they get older. They play sports. Everything has to be a competition. Who needs the stress?"

If you play FDG, every shot is the shot of the day, whether it lands 10 yards in front of you or in the basket 90 yards away. Rounds are bought by those whose discs land, intentionally or unintentionally, on top of another's—a "capper." No one

keeps score, wears special clothes or sabotages another's fun.

THE PATRON SAINT of FDG is the legendary "Steady" Ed Headrick, who didn't just invent FDG—he invented the Frisbee too. He died in 2002, but left behind a legacy encouraging youth, families and those searching for a fulfilling way to pass the day to pick up a disc. "[FDG players] have found an amazingly simple game," Headrick once wrote, "that makes no

demands, has no limitations and provides a mechanism with which they learn to deal with themselves.... They gather in large numbers to participate... unsupervised on facilities that cost less than a tennis court and little to maintain. Newcomers are soon converted to regular players by the example of others. The unwanted soon leave to live out their problems and fantasies someplace else."

Summertime is an opportunity to sneak out of work early (or not

even show up at all) and get outside. If you're looking for a new way to experience the sun's rewarding rays, check out FDG. Just ride your bike to Rundle or car-pool out to Lilly Lake, stretch your arms and walk onto the course. But don't worry about having the right disc, the correct shoes or knowing the rules. There are none.

"What's a good day for FDG?" Colin asks Dan before every game.

"Trick question," Dan replies. "Every day is a good day for FDG." ●

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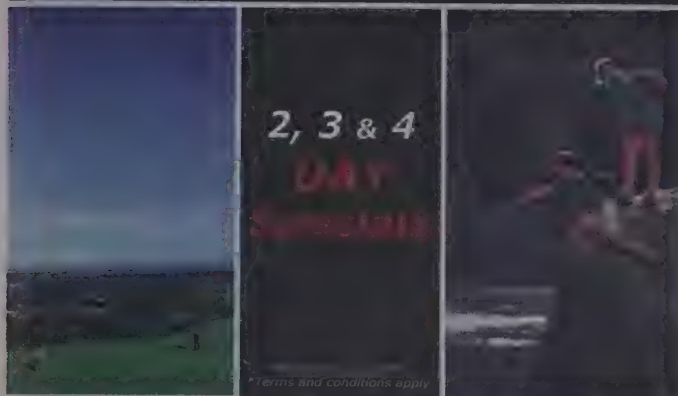
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Two wheels good—and indestructible!

Hard-pedaling Vancouver mountain biker meets his match in the Superbike

By CHRIS BOUTET

You wouldn't know it by looking at him, but Vancouverite Jeff Mottershead is a killer. No, not the bad kind of killer who, you know, kills people. Mottershead kills mountain bikes. Frequently. But the 24-year-old physics grad student is no monster; he knew that the carnage would eventually have to come to an end—and faced with this reality, he set out to create a bike that not even he could destroy. Five years later, the Superbike reached completion, and has been leaning against the wall of his bedroom ever since, waiting patiently for its first day of downhill riding.

Thus far in his life, Mottershead's affinity for downhill has caused him to burn through an impressive array of bike frames, including but not limited to a "big-ass" GT Tech and five carbon-fibre STSs, he explains. Then, of course, there's the even more amazing number of parts he's managed to mangle. "I'd blow drivetrains constantly," he explains from his home in Kitsilano. "On the little BMX I ride around now I have a chain ring that I machined that takes a motorcycle chain, and I make my own hubs and stuff, so now I have a commuting bike that basically holds together. I'd gone through a ton of forks in all kinds of different ways, bending them over, snapping the stair tubes, blowing the damping. I've also gone through about 10

pairs of crank arms.

"Basically," he continues, "I've broken every part of a standard mountain bike a lot of times by doing stupid crap like jumping and stuff, so I wanted to have a bike with which I could do that kind of stuff, that would have better performance for what I wanted to do without breaking all the time. So I ended up embarking on making a ridiculous monstrosity that would be ideal for running down something and taking a big fat jump off it."

STANDING AT 48 INCHES at the handlebars and weighing an estimated 180 pounds, calling the Superbike a monstrosity might be an understatement. While the seat and post were borrowed from a conventional mountain bike, the wheels, suspension, drivetrain and brakes were pirated from a Honda CR 250 motocross bike. Holding everything together is a custom frame that Mottershead machined out of 6061 aluminum, and which makes up the bulk of the bike's ungainly mass. As Mottershead explained, figuring out what he needed in a bike was the easy part; but without access to a machine shop, he found himself forced to do a little improvising.

"Obviously, I've seen all the different kinds of way that a bike will break," he says, "so I knew to put on a little extra stuff in those locations. As for suspension stuff, I knew quite clearly that you can have a lot more fun with a motocross suspension than with anything you could get with a standard mountain bike. So it was an easy decision to just move over to motocross suspension, wheels and brakes.

"Of course," he continues, "I

had done a fair bit of machining before, but I had to learn a few tricks. I bought a bunch of tools and my own little tiny lathe, and getting small, underpowered machines that are fairly wobbly to cut big parts required a few tricks that you don't really learn when you're using good machinery on small stuff as I had before. In the end, though, I think it turned out alright."

ALTHOUGH MOTTERSHEAD has yet to take the bike out into the hills, a few test drives around his neighbourhood have given him a pretty clear idea of the bike's advantages and drawbacks. "Well, there are two major, really clear drawbacks to the design," he says. "It's heavy, you bob

a lot when you're pedaling and the wheels have a lot of rolling resistance,

so it's for downhill and jumping only; even on just flat asphalt it's a really difficult ride. Also, you can't have a derailleur to change speeds on a motorcycle chain, so it's a one-speed. The other challenging thing is that with the suspension travel as long as it is [10 inches on the front, 15 in the back], it puts the bottom bracket where the pedals come out really high, so it's a little difficult to get on it and maintain control.

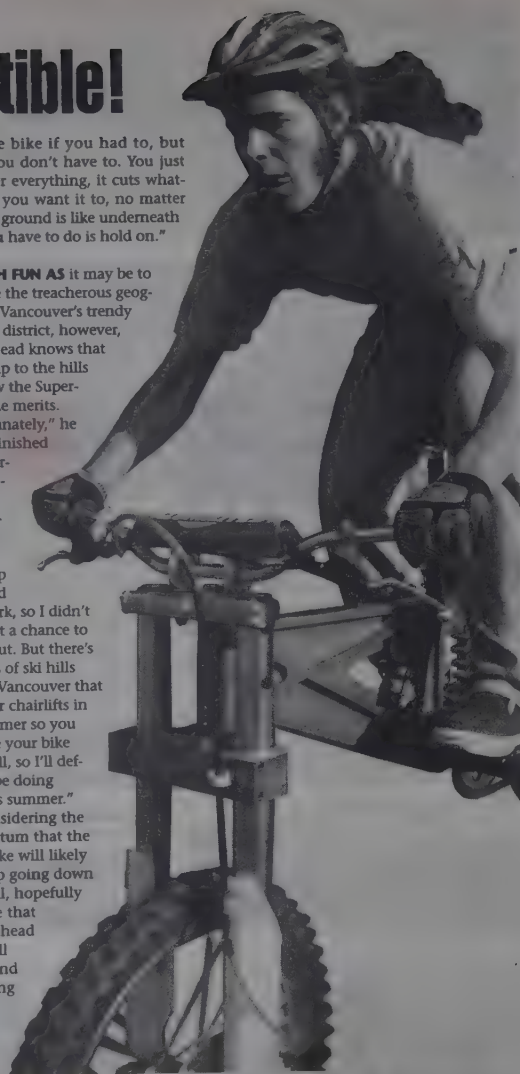
"Once you're going down something, though," he continues, "all the problems go away; it's the easiest thing in the world to drive once you're letting gravity do the work. And you can hit basically anything with it, you can just go right over it. I've taken it over a pile of railroad ties in my neighbourhood, some construction stuff—you can go up a high curb sideways with just a grazing 10-degree angle, you don't even have to do anything for that, I mean, it's not like you could really

jump the bike if you had to, but luckily you don't have to. You just coast over everything, it cuts whatever line you want it to, no matter what the ground is like underneath it. All you have to do is hold on."

AS MUCH FUN AS it may be to negotiate the treacherous geography of Vancouver's trendy Kitsilano district, however, Mottershead knows that only a trip to the hills will show the Superbike's true merits.

"Unfortunately," he says, "I finished the Superbike pretty late last summer and then I ended up swamped with work, so I didn't really get a chance to take it out. But there's all kinds of ski hills around Vancouver that run their chairlifts in the summer so you can take your bike downhill, so I'll definitely be doing that this summer."

Considering the momentum that the Superbike will likely build up going down a ski hill, hopefully the bike that Mottershead can't kill won't end up killing him. ●



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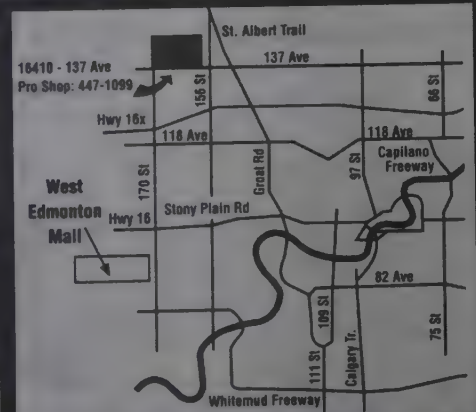
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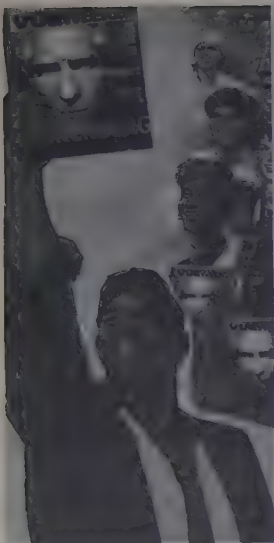
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CULINA

9914-89 Ave • 437-5588

A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-

band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories like day dishes (culina is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeine, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hotpot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at culina means a mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange ginger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large,

browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 04/01/04)

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Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they consist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then

you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiver. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, whereupon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drummie. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 03/04/04)



SEE PAGE 22

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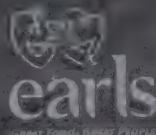


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Bears and treacherous roads are the only obstacles to fine dining during B.C. trip

By DAVID DiCENZO

Where to eat breakfast was never a concern on a recent weekend excursion to Golden, B.C. Kate (my better half) and I fuelled up each and every morning at the Vagabond Lodge, a beautiful new B&B run by former Edmonton-based TSN reporter Ken Chilibeck and his wife Lori. The spread, like the hosts, was generous: steaming hot croissants, cheeses, jams, yogurt, fresh fruit and juice. Kate and I would finish our coffee at the chessboard adjacent to the palatial-but-rustic living room area, complete with fireplace and a dazzling bar carved out of wood.

Certainly a nice way to start the day in this relatively untouched mountain resort town some six hours west of the River City.

Between the continuous black bear sightings along Kicking Horse Trail (the most intriguing of which

gave us a glimpse of a confident mama bear and her two adorable offspring), the stunning Golden golf course and the panoramic views of the surrounding Rockies, there's more than enough to hold your attention. But at some point, that dropped jaw has to be used for eating. Our first dining destination was one of Ken's suggestions and the wily TV vet was bang-on with this insider

DINING

report. He said if we were into burgers, then the Mad Trapper Pub was the place to go, particularly on a Thursday. We zip down the hill to the town core and find the friendly neighbourhood joint. It's a fun room—like much of Golden, the décor is all wood—though the mood is somewhat glum as the locals watch the Flames succumb to the San Jose Sharks on the many TVs throughout the pub. I'm not nearly as down. My pint is frosty and the huge, juicy bacon cheeseburger with crispy fries in front of me is as cheap as it is delectable at \$3.75 per (the Thursday night special our friend Basil Fawley—er, Ken—had told us about).

On the second day, I play 18 at

the renowned golf course. After a pretty solid 88 (could've been a stellar round, but two blow-up holes really hurt me), I hook up with Kate and we venture into town again in search of food. We tool around for a bit and then decide on the Turning Point Restaurant, kind of a mid-scale place with a menu that an optimist would call varied and a more narrow-minded soul would call indecisive. We focus on the Greek component of the listed items, starting with a plate of feta and kalamata olives and an order of calamari. The feta and olives would've gone down a lot better with some nice extra virgin olive oil to moisten it up, but the calamari was pretty good—tender with a nice, refreshing tzatziki dip. Kate and I split the chicken souvlaki entrée, which is fine, although the meagre single skewer of fowl hardly justifies the \$13-\$14 price tag. We finish our half-litre of wine and decide to square up quickly.

THE NEXT DAY is an adventure of extraordinary proportions. It begins with our usual breakfast routine at the Vagabond and takes some wild twists just a few hundred metres away from the lodge. Mama Bear and her little ones are chewing grass right on the side of the road and we snap a few dozen pics of the furry trio just steps away from the car. It's mesmerizing. On the advice of the crew at the lodge, we take the scenic two-hour drive down 95 through Radium Hot Springs and Invermere, beyond Fairmont and onto a place called Whiteswan Lake Provincial Park, home to a much more remote hot springs.

There's a good reason it's remote: the 20-kilometre trek down a loose gravel logging road hugging the side of the mountain with no guardrail is probably about as terrifying a drive as I've ever experienced. It might be the only day trip I know of that requires a defibrillator and two pairs of boxers. With our hearts in our throats, we try to enjoy the hot springs and the incredible views of the flowing river and endless stretch of towering trees but all I can think of was driving back up. (The old guy in the Speedo unnerves me a little too.) That return ride is a little less harrowing seeing as the car is on the mountain side of the "lane" rather than next to the precarious edge. Still, it was no picnic.

"I think Lori was trying to kill us off," Kate jokes nervously.

GIVEN THE STATE of my stomach, food is the last thing on my mind for some time but by the time we

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DISH WEEKLY

IL PONTICO

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Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tantalizing apps like the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, corn-fed, free-range chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dressing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, including prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is

seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are showstoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish.

Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$ (Reviewed 02/26/04)

LOS ANDES RESTAURANT

3903-99 St • 435-6202

It's hard to imagine that a tiny joint tucked away in a southside industrial neighbourhood off 99 Street would have the abundance of charm this modest establishment does. Flags of Chile hang from the high ceiling and one entire wall is covered with a landscape mural depicting the very mountains that give the place its name. A carnivorous theme is evident on the menu from the lunch special (beef and rice for just \$5.95) right through to the sopa del día (soup of the day), also beef. I give strong consideration to the hamburguesa de pollo (a chicken burger) but in the end, I happily decide on the lomito (\$4.50), a sandwich of thinly sliced pork with avocado. I also want the Los Andes salad and I'm pleased to find from my host that I can get some on the side for a mere two dollars. The salad comes first. It's a simple mix of Romaine, tomato slices and a

vinaigrette topped with some chopped cilantro but the lettuce is crisp and the dressing is clean and bold enough to almost wake me up from my trance as I read a mag. The sandwich follows shortly thereafter and my first bite confirms the wisdom of my decision. There's a healthy amount of both white and darker pork in it but it's the avocado and fresh bread that make the meal. It's warm and rich, with the items all melding together as it passes over the palate. The bun itself is crunchy, light and unlike anything I've had around here. "Do you make the bread?" I ask the motherly figure doing the serving. She nods. It may seem like an innocuous touch but I just love the fact that they've made a great sandwich even better by making the bread themselves. I mean, it's a helluva lot more representative of the culture than going to Safeway and picking up a few bags of kaisers, right? As I mop up every last crumb and piece of lettuce, my thoughts go to servicing my sweet tooth. Los Andes has three choices (at lunch, anyway): flan, ice cream with strawberry topping and the torta mil hojas. "How's the torta?" The lady in charge simply kisses her fingers to indicate the quality. Surprise, surprise, I'm sold. The large slice of cake (only three bucks, if you can believe it) features numerous flaky layers of pastry all held together by what initially resembles a peanut butter mixture but is actually some type of ultra-sweet caramel. It's absolutely delicious. I live by the motto that nothing is too sweet, though this comes close. **Average Price: \$-\$\$ (Reviewed 05/06/04)**

SEE PAGE 24

What's Your Favourite Patio Sport?



OVERTIME
BROILER & TAPROOM

Introducing Low Carb Summer Menu

Original Downtown Patio
Southside Patio • Opens May 4th

Vagabond Lodge

Continued from page 21

approach Golden again, secure in the knowledge that we'd indeed survived, the two of us are ready to eat. We again go with one of Ken's suggestions and visit a funky little spot called ELEVEN22, where the food is class but the vibe, like most of the town, is casual. We order a wild boar pâté with gin and cranberry compote to start, along with another app, the shrimp and crab taquitos. The pate comes with some of ELEVEN22's fresh homemade bread. It's tasty and unique but the taquitos, a crab, shrimp and ricotta mixture stuffed into a flaky pastry tube then lightly deep-fried (and served with a spicy chipotle yogurt dip) are incredible—beautiful textures and just a great blend of flavours. We split the chori-

zo sausage and mussels hot pot (also a winner) before getting into a piece of their amazing chocolate truffle cake, whose consistency falls somewhere between a fluffy mousse and a rich cheesecake. Kudos to the chef.

By Sunday morning, it's time to head back to northern Alberta and the Chillibecks give us a real nice sendoff with Ken's famous apple pancakes for brekkie. A touch of real Quebec maple syrup and fresh mango slices make the flapjacks sing even more. We say our goodbyes and even get one final look at the bear family. They seem content chewing on the grass. Despite my more sophisticated diet, I'm envious. They get to hang around Golden every day. ●

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BEST RESTAURANT
FOR LOVERS**



DISH WEEKLY

OVERTIME SOUTH

Whitemud Crossing (4211-106 St.)

• 485-1717

I've been to the downtown Overtime in the past, but this version, once home to a Scruffy Murphy's, is definitely different. Sure, the numerous TVs and comfy little alcoves to relax in with friends are the same, and the Kevin Lowe paraphernalia is visible as a framed Team Canada jersey belonging to the Oil GM and part owner hangs at the bar. But other than the mini-humidor, the swank-o-meter hardly registers. No, this is a more proletariat crowd—couples, dudes in ballcaps and beer. Another thing that's different is the food. I recall a relatively in-depth, upscale bar-food menu at the downtown digs but Overtime South... Well, I'm pretty sure it's the old Scruffy's menu. There's your typical roadhouse fare of finger foods and sandwiches, with a Guinness pie and all-day Irish breakfast thrown in for

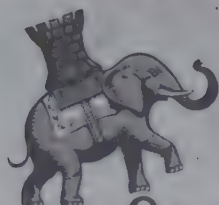
good measure. I'm somewhat tempted by the latter, which has eggs, sausages, blood pudding, Irish soda bread and tomatoes, but I bail. The waitress lets us know that wings and mussels are on special and we end up trying some of each. We get a pound of medium wings, on for just \$3.50. "I like the sauce," Kate says of the plump wings. "It's buttery. And I like the mussels too." I agree. The wings actually have a good amount of meat on them, unlike many places that serve disgraceful, bony little things for their specials. Nothing at all wrong with the mussels either, as the white wine cream concoction has ample flavour and surprisingly, the focaccia is good. Nowhere near the same neighbourhood as my mother's, but light and airy nonetheless. We split the two ample pieces of fish and divvy up the ultra-thin deep-fried potato slices that represent the "chips" half of the equation. I was a little unsure of things when I first walked into Overtime South. It wasn't what I initially envisioned and the menu seemed like a

step down from the original location. But you know what? The place is similar to the Oil throughout this courageous stretch drive in March—better than expected. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 03/25/04)

SANTA MARIA GORETTI COMMUNITY CENTRE

11050-90 St • 426-5026

I first heard of this decadent "pranzo" (brunch) through local food writers Judy Schultz and Mary Bailey, who included a nice blurb about chef Sergio Re's weekly gathering in The Food Lover's Trail Guide to Alberta. I've been dying to try it ever since. Seven courses—sounds intimidating, right? Not for me. I grew up with these types of meals. We start out with an antipasto plate. Despite the fact that Kate and I sit at a table alone, this initial platter, featuring fresh mortadella, capicollo, salami, cheese and marinated vegetables, is enough to feed a much bigger group. "This plate alone is worth \$15," says Kate, referring to the measly per-person price of the



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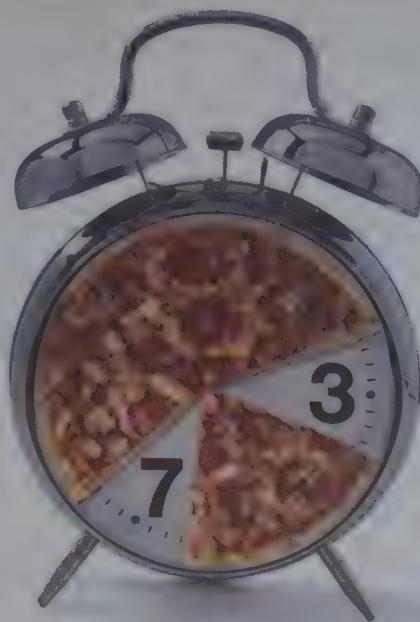
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brunch. By the time course number two—a mix of perfectly done calamari and baby shrimp in a rich sauce served over rice—arrives, I notice that the numbers in this gargantuan hall are increasing exponentially. I feel like I've crashed some big Italian wedding. The pasta course is on deck. A member of our service team tells us to flag him down whenever we're ready and moments after we give the nod, he returns with a big bowl of meat tortellini in a simple tomato sauce. I give mine a good dose of grated parm and a few shots of pepper but after a small second helping, even I am starting to lose the battle against my stomach. We figure a wine break is in order. I walk outside of the room to the hallway bar and buy a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon for a mere \$15. Sure, it's only noon on Sunday and I have soccer practice in two hours, but some deals simply can't be passed up. Three courses arrive all at once: roast beef and gravy, a fish dish (with

SEE PAGE 28

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WINNERS

DISHES

BEST APPETIZER

YIANNIS
10444-82 AVENUE 433-6768

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Kelseys
• Moxies

BEST SOUP

TIM HORTONS
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. French Meadow Artisan Bakery Café

BEST SALAD

TURTLE CREEK CAFÉ
8404-109 ST 433-4202

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Earls
• Wendy's

BEST BREAD

BEE BELL BAKERY
10416-80 AVENUE 439-3247

Runners-Up
1. French Meadow Artisan Bakery Café
2. (Tie) • Old Spaghetti Factory
• Keg

BEST STEAK

KEG STEAKHOUSE
8020-105 ST 432-7494
13960-137 AVE 472-0707
9960-170 ST 414-7111

1. Hys Steak Loft
2. 9 establishments tied for second runner-up

BEST VENISON

NORMANDS
11639 JASPER AVE 482-2600

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Unheardof Restaurant

• Moose Factory
• Sawmill Restaurant

BEST SUSHI

KYOTO
8701-109 ST 414-6055
10128-109 ST 420-1750
14917 STONY PLAIN RD 443-6668

Runners-Up
1. Mikado
2. Tokyo Express
3. Kobe

BEST TAPAS

4 ROOMS
137 CITY CENTRE EAST 426-4767

Runners-Up
1. La Tapa
2. 4 Establishments tied for second runner-up

BEST PUB FOOD

BREWSTERS
11620-104 AVE 482-4677
15820-87 AVE 421-4677

Runners-Up
1. Sherlock Holmes
2. (Tie) • O'Byrnes
• Next Act Pub
• Elephant & Castle

BEST DIM SUM

NOODLE NOODLE
10008 106 ST 422-6862

Runners-Up
1. Mirama
2. (Tie) • Dim Sum
• Dynasty
• Golden Rice Bowl

BEST SANDWICHES

FIFE N DEKEL
9114-51 AVE 465-4444
12028-149 ST 454-5503
10646-170 ST 489-6436

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Italian Bakery
• Subway
• Dadeo
3. (Tie) • French Meadow Artisan Bakery Café

BEST BURGER

TIED FOR WINNER
THE GARAGE BURGER BAR & GRILL
10242-106 ST 423-5014

HARVEYS
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. Red Robin
3. (Tie) • Burger Baron
• Next Act Pub

BEST FRIES

MCDONALDS
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. N.Y. Fries
2. Dadeo
3. (Tie) • Next Act Pub
• Red Robin

BEST WRAPS

BAD ASS JACKS
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. Pita Pit
2. Extreme Pita

BEST PIZZA

PIZZA 73
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. Funky Pickle
2. Panago

BEST DESSERTS

VI'S FOR PIES
13408 STONY PLAIN RD 454-4300

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Moxies
• D.Q.
3. (Tie) • Russian Tea Room
• Two Rooms

BEST CHICKEN WINGS

PIZZA 73
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Earls
• Red Robin
3. 4 establishments tied for third runner-up

BEST SMOOTHIE/FRUIT DRINK

BOOSTER JUICE
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. Orange Julius
2. 4 establishments tied for second runner-up

RESTAURANTS

BEST BREAKFAST

TIED FOR WINNER
HIGHLEVEL DINER
10912-88 AVE 433-0993

BARB & ERNIES
9906-76 AVE 433-3242

Runners-Up
1. Upper Crust
2. Ricky's All Day Grill

BEST BAKERY

BEE BELL BAKERY
10416-80 AVENUE 439-3247

Runners-Up
1. (Tie) • Italian Bakery
• Tim Hortons
• French Meadow Artisan Bakery Café

BEST COFFEE/TEA SHOP

SECOND CUP
Multiple Locations

Runners-Up
1. Tim Hortons
2. (Tie) • Steeps
• Cargo & James

BEST DELI

ITALIAN BAKERY

Multiple Locations

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Sunterra Market
- Save On Foods

BEST BAVARIAN

THE MILL

8109-101 ST

432-1838

Runners-Up

1. Bauernschmaus Restaurant
2. (Tie) • Continental Treat
- Barb & Ernies

BEST GREEK

YIANNIS TAVERNA

10444-82 AVE

433-6768

Runners-Up

1. Koutouki
2. Cosmos
3. Symposium

BEST FRENCH

THE CREPERIE

10220-103 ST

420-6656

Runners-Up

1. Three Musketeers
2. 5 establishments tied for second runner-up

BEST ITALIAN

IL PORTICO

10012-107 ST

424-0707

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Sorrentinos
- Old Spaghetti Factory
- Chiantis
- That's Aroma
- Il Forno

BEST CHINESE

GOLDEN RICE BOWL

5365 GATEWAY BLVD

435-3388

Runners-Up

1. Oriental Noodle House
2. 5 establishments tied for second runner-up

BEST THAI

THE KING & I

8218-107 ST

433-2222

1. Ban Thai
2. (Tie) • Pad Thai
- Bua Thai

BEST JAPANESE

JAPANESE VILLAGE

10126 100 ST

422-6083

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Kyoto
- Mikado
3. Tokyo Express

BEST EAST INDIAN

NEW ASIAN VILLAGE

10143 SASKATCHEWAN DR

433-3804

17507-100 AVE

488-6666

Runners-Up

1. Khazana
2. Maurya Palace
3. Jewel of Kashmir

BEST MEXICAN/ LATIN AMERICAN

JULIOS BARRIO

10450-82 AVE

431-0774

BOURBON ST WEM

443-3076

17021-100 ST

484-5165

Runners-Up

1. Churros King
2. (Tie) • Acajutla
- Los Camales

BEST STEAKHOUSE

KEG STEAKHOUSE

8020-105 ST

432-7494

13960-137 AVE

472-0707

9960-170 ST

414-7111

Runners-Up

1. Hys Steak Loft
2. Outback
3. Sawmill

BEST SEAFOOD

BILLINGSGATE

7331-104 ST

433-0091

Runners-Up

1. Red Lobster
2. Joey's Only

BEST VEGETARIAN

Café MOSAICS

10844-82 AVE

433-9702

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Veggie House
- Pagolac

OTHER BESTS

BEST SWEETS

DEATH BY CHOCOLATE

WEM

486-2001

Runners-Up

1. Carol's Sweets
2. Bee Bell Bakery

BEST SNACKS

TIM HORTONS

Multiple Locations

Runners-Up

Tied for

1. (Tie) • Organic Roots
- Great Canadian Bagel
- Punjab Groceries

BEST PRE-THEATRE DINING

ELEPHANT & CASTLE

10314-82 AVE

439-1702

EDMONTON CENTRE WEST

426-6542

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Moxies
- Boston Pizza
- McDonalds

BEST RESTAURANT FOR LOVERS

THE CREPERIE

10220-103 ST

420-6656

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Flavours
- Normands
- Unheardof Restaurant
- Red Ox Inn

MOST INNOVATIVE MENU

DADEO

10548-82 AVE

433-0930

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Culina
- Normands
- Flavours

BEST WINE LIST

FLAVOURS

10354-82 AVE

439-9604

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Il Portico
- Ric's Grill

BEST BEER LIST

NEW ASIAN VILLAGE

10143 SASKATCHEWAN DR

433-3804

17507-100 AVE

488-6666

Runners-Up

1. Brewsters
2. (Tie) • Savoy
- The Globe
- Hudson's Tap House

BEST PLACE WHEN YOU ONLY HAVE \$10

McDONALDS

Multiple Locations

Runners-Up

1. Tokyo Express
2. Subway

BEST PLACE WHEN SOMEONE ELSE IS PAYING

LA RONDE

10111 BELLAMY HILL

428-6611

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Unheardof Restaurant
- Jack's Grill
- Hy's Steak Loft
- Il Portico

BEST LATE NIGHT/ ALL NIGHT

KEEGANS

8709-109 ST

439-8034

12904-97 ST

457-5590

Runners-Up

1. Boston Pizza
2. (Tie) • Funky Pickle
- McDonalds

BEST WEEKEND BRUNCH

TIED AS WINNER

HIGH LEVEL DINER

10912-88 AVE

433-0093

HOTEL MACDONALD

10065-100 ST

424-5181

Runners-Up

1. Sawmill
2. (Tie) • Moose Factory
- Season's Grill

BEST SERVICE

MIKADO

10350-109 ST

425-8096

Runners-Up

1. Red Ox Inn
2. 5 establishments tied for second runner-up

BEST SPORTS BAR

SCHANKS

9927-178 ST

444-2125

Runners-Up

1. Fargo's on Whyte
2. Overtime
3. Don Cherry's

BEST PATIO

EARLS TIN PALACE

11830 JASPER AVE

488-6582

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • O'Byrnes
- Hotel MacDonald
2. Joey Tomatoes

BEST CHAIN

EARLS

Multiple Locations

Runners-Up

1. Tim Hortons
2. (Tie) • Joey Tomatoes
- Boston Pizza

BEST HOTEL

HOTEL MACDONALD

10065-100 ST

424-5181

Runners-Up

1. (Tie) • Union Bank Inn
- Sutton Place
- Cedar Park Best Western
- The Westin



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DISH WEEKLY

accompanying potatoes and mixed vegetables) and a bowl of salad featuring greens, sliced tomatoes and shredded carrots tossed in a simple vinaigrette. The broiled sole fillets are tasty, especially with a splash of lemon. Finally, there's just one course remaining. Our guy tells us that chocolate cake is the dessert this Sunday. Instinctively, I tell him that one slice will be fine to split and the kid makes me proud by suggesting that he'll ensure it's a big one. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/29/04)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153

True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes

from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some of the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: It's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

ZOCCA'S PIZZERIA

10807 Castledowns Road • 473-6339

After a trek to the city's northernmost point (my cell's signal was gone), I walk in Zocca's to find a few old boys putting away some afternoon pitchers. I grab a seat at a small table just a small leap away from the claw machine and the parquet dance floor, which I'm certain is hopping on Saturdays (\$1.99 highballs for Ladies' Night). The specials sign reveals that you can get a \$50 bar tab for your birthday ("ask server for details," it reads) and I get sad when I realize I probably couldn't even drink enough anymore to use the

damn thing up. I can eat, however, and I bypass all the baked loaves, pastas and parmigianis on the menu and go straight to the pizzas. They come in either medium or large and aside from the build-your-own options, there are also has a few gourmet specialties: the Zorba (take a guess at the items on that one), the VIP (featuring a strange mix of salami and shrimp) and the Donair. I go for the medium Cajun chicken, which features red and green peppers, onions, mushrooms, a special Cajun spice and the diced chicken. Like one of the older gents sitting on his draft, I flip through the paper while I patiently wait. After a while, the bar-keep/server pops by. "It's coming," she says. "These are thick pizzas." And she puts her two hands about three inches apart to give me an idea of what to expect. She's not kidding—the pie arrives on a stylish old serving tray and it looks more like a big quiche than your typical flat pizza, maybe even thicker than the server had claimed. The dough is moist on the interior but exceptionally crispy on the outside, just the way I like it. And the toppings are loaded on, from the chunky pieces of peppers to the hearty chunks of ultra-tender, spicy chicken. They put a layer of cheese over the top but not just a few loose strands of shredded mozzarella. This is a layer with uniform consistency, like getting the bottom of your car undercoated. It's a crust in itself and this pizza is one that most definitely requires utensils. The thought of sampling some three-for-one takeout crud after trying this gem just horrifies me. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/15/04)

A U T H E N T I C

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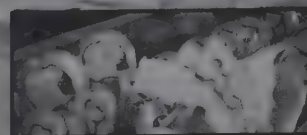
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MUSIC

Dalle and response

Don't you dare call newly-minted major-labellers the Distillers "sellouts"

By DAVE JOHNSTON

Bringing up the term "sellout" and be prepared for the wave that comes back from a guy like Tony "Bichon" Bradley. The guitarist for the Distillers has been with the band for a long time—he worked as a guitar tech for original member Rose Casper—and he's seen the group evolve from a scrappy trio formed by the spiky Aussie Brody Dalle in 1998 to the breakthrough mainstage act it is today.

Yet when the Distillers left Hellcat Records—the label owned by Dalle's ex-husband and Rancid frontman Tim Armstrong—and released *Coral Fang* on the major label Sire last year, the punk underground split in half. Not only was it available at your local big-box retailer, but it was also a far more melodic affair than anything they'd recorded before.

"You know what?" sighs Bradley. "The 'crying sellout' stuff is such a 15-year-old punk rock kid mentality, and who really gives a shit? All the people who think we suck now because we're on a major label now are bullshit, because all record labels are the same. They turn your band into a product, they try to sell it and they try to make money on it. I don't care if it's the most punk-ass indie or a huge major—it doesn't matter."

So why did the Distillers make the jump? "A lot of reasons," he replies.

"We did it for distribution. We did it so we could spend five weeks in the studio instead of rushing through in a week and a half. We want to be able to operate our band on a big scale so we can go on tour and record when we need to. We were never able to do that before. I don't understand the sellout thing—we want our band to be big, and we want to be able to

make music for a living and do this forever. We're not trying to be small and sell two records, and I don't know what band wants to do that."

THE BAND DID HAVE to make one compromise with *Coral Fang*: switching the original cover image of a crucified figure bleeding from a fatal gash to a field full of cuddly animals. "It's a big, giant 'fuck you' to the people who made us change [the art]," he says. "Big chain stores in America wouldn't carry our record because of the cover, so what do you do when you're faced with that situation? It was really hard for us and didn't sit well with us. When you're told that your record isn't going to be carried in Best Buy, Wal-Mart and Target, what do you do? That's a huge percentage of sales in [America], and we want kids to be able to buy our record in the middle of the country where there isn't tons of record stores in the city you can go to. You live out in the middle of Nebraska, and the only place you can find a record is at Wal-Mart. It would be unfortunate to a kid who's just getting into our music if they couldn't find our record. You have to make [the

music] accessible to people."

It's not like the band changed any of the songs, though. The album picks up where 2000's *Sing Sing Death House* left off, cranking up the melodic diversity while still attacking the affairs of humankind on a personal and global level. "I don't think the change in musical approach was a calculated thing," Bradley says. "Brody started writing songs for the new record, and that's just how they came out. I mean, how many times can you put out the same record? The first and second records were a big jump, and this is one is a big jump as well. It's just Brody's progression as an artist—you grow up, you start listening to different things and you start trying different things."

The bottom line, Bradley adds, is that punk rock in general needs to evolve. "For a scene that's supposed to be so radical in thought and action, it's really close-minded," he says. "Punk rock, to me, isn't having to conform to a certain thing. Punk rock is a fashion statement to a lot of kids—so why not go be a goth kid or something? You're conforming to an ideal that someone has made for you. Do something different. That's what punk was—you had Blondie, the Talking Heads, the Ramones and Richard Hell doing all kinds of shit. It all sounded different, and they were being individuals, and that was considered punk. Now it's all about a studded jacket and a Mohawk, and if you don't have those, you're not punk." ●

THE DISTILLERS

With *Crowned King* • Red's • Sat, May 22 (all ages, 7pm)

SIDETRACK CAFE

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THU
20

SHIKASTA

The Rock n' Soul explosion from Toronto returns with THE CRIPPLE CREEK FAIRIES and THE TAYLOR DONS.

FRI
21

CAROLYN MARK & HER NEW BEST FRIENDS

CD Release

Victoria's party girl releases her latest. With guests THE RAMBLIN AMBASSADORS and THE SILVER SPURS.

SAT
22

THE JAMES T. KIRKS

10th Anniversary spectacle. With guests THE VON ZIPPERS and THE BLAME-ITS.

SUN
23

CRUSH-X

Under the Cover Sundays, plus DJ Dudeman.

TUE
25

WINE, WOMEN & SONG

A Celebration of Edmonton's best female singer/songwriters featuring KYLA SANDULAK, MONIQUE LAFLAMME and COLLEEN BROWN.

WED
26

LOST ACTION HEROES

A special acoustic show, by 3 of Edmonton's best bands. Also featuring TUESDAY CAN'T TELL and CALICO DRIVE.

THU
27

MY SISTER OCEAN

With Toronto's TWO MINUTE MIRACLES and Calgary's THE MOOD. A great night of Indie-Pop!

FRI
28

HOT LITTLE ROCKET

Wow! 4 unbelievable bands on one night! With guests JUCIFER, SEKIDEN and CHAMPION ALBERTA.



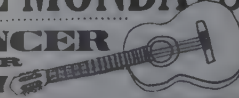
MAY 29th Painting Daisies • The Almost Leather Band
JUNE 1st The Perpetrators • Los Bastardos JUNE 22nd Ham • First Aid Kit
MAY 31st Despistado, The Statistics • No Hands

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MUSIC



music notes

By PHIL DUPERRON
AND JERED STUFFCO

Just winging it

The Cripple Creek Fairies • With Shikasta and the Taylor Dons • Sidetrack Café • Thu, May 20 The Cripple Creek Fairies are an enigmatic bunch. The Calgary-based garage rockers are as well-known for their gritty and goofy rock ditties as they are for wearing WWII-vintage aviator caps and goggles. But who are the men behind the masks? Part of the problem may

be that no one from Edmonton has ever seen the same lineup twice. They've been blitzing up north since 2000, but until now their revolving-door policy of active and reassigned members has kept people guessing as to what to expect.

"It tends to fluctuate," admits Les Izmoore, the band's "sub-sonic disruption cannon operator." (That's a bass player for the uninformed.) It's not like they're doing it on purpose—Izmoore is no control freak who fires people for not showing up to practice or anything. Members also have a habit of getting jobs or having kids or moving to other cities. In fact this could be the last Edmonton performance for drummer Le Rouge Baron, who may be moving back to his native Quebec to be, of all things, a gymnastics coach.

The Cripple Creek Fairies have been working on a new disc for some time now. All the songs have been recorded but the album (entitled *The Fist*) will have to wait until later this

summer to see the light of day. That's because there's a full-blown comic book illustrated by artist Tim Huesken depicting the Fairies as rock 'n' roll superheroes coming with it. In the meantime, CCF has assembled a collection of their earliest recordings, many of them unreleased, under the title *Blast Off* and an EP of covers called *Mustache Rock 2002* to keep fans happy.

Those fans probably still have vivid memories of the last time the Fairies were in town, and the organ-playing madman named Conrad Montana who they brought along with them. Montana spent half the set literally riding his instrument, adding some potent entertainment value to the mix. The funny thing is, his death-defying performance happened after recent surgery. "He was working it with a hernia," Izmoore says, "or I guess a fresh stitched-up hernia. Actually, he's got a five-year-old son who hit him in the nuts with a golf club a couple weeks

**FRIDAY
MAY 21**

**THE GRASSROOT
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\$5.00
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ago, so he may have to get some more repair work done." (PD)

Maniac on the floor

Maniac Sumo Cunt • With Mechanical Separation and Hellthrasher • Stars (main floor)
• Fri, May 21 After moving to Calgary from B.C. for work and family, guitarist John McDonald was shocked to find the city lacked a decent grind-core scene. Sure, there was a good collection of punk bands and skate-rockers, even a little black metal to be found here and there, but when it came to balls-out screaming metal sending sparks up your spine... nothing. So he did what any self-respecting metalhead would do: he formed Maniac Sumo Cunt with three like-minded friends. "We're really fast and really noisy," McDonald says. "Pretty much we were sick of having no grind in the city of Calgary. There's just not much of a crowd for it. I hear Vancouver's got a pretty good scene and Saskatoon too. It's kind of a dull spot in the middle, I guess."

While Maniac Sumo Cunt have only been together for six months and are taking their first road trip this weekend, they've already noticed an uptick in interest. Their shows have, of course, grown bigger each time they play and pick up new fans among the local punks and headbangers, but they've also discovered a slew of other Alberta bands grinding it up out there.

"We're trying to get more people interested in it," McDonald says. "We find the more we play, the more bands we find who are interested in it."

Although their band name doesn't really mean anything, it's certainly an attention-getter. Hey, anything to get a leg up on the competition. "Right now we're just trying to get our sound out there, get some publicity and play a bunch of shows," McDonald says. So far they only have a few tracks posted on www.soundclick.com but a disc is in the works. "We're just waiting for the right time," he says. "We're trying to do it right. We're taking our time to make sure everything is good." (PD)

Raising a Stink

The GhettoBlasters • With Rorschach • Seedy's • Sat, May 22
 Since forming through a mutual love for what lead singer Jimmy Gregory calls "partying," the boys in local rock outfit the GhettoBlasters have seen their part-time vanity project blossom into a serious, full-fledged rock 'n' roll venture. With a full-length album already under their studded leather belts and another on the way, the



Paul Gygerson

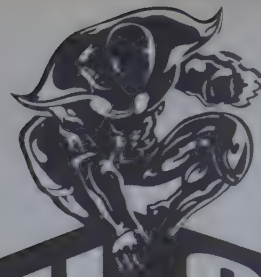
SNFU • New City • Fri, May 14 • reVUE It was the week for the old punk warriors to come to town. First, Nomeansno delivered a flawless set to mark their silver anniversary at the Sidetrack. Then, SNFU lit up the stage at New City. Where Nomeansno intentionally played only the hits that were picked out by the public for the *People's Choice* CD, SNFU was eager to try out a few new ones on the capacity crowd. On the stage, they were backed out by a medical team, and a few galangs. Even though Mr. Chi Pig looked like a street person ravaged by drugs and time, and the band's new material was a bit off-kilter, and the crowd's reaction was a bit off-kilter, the new fresh-faced back line they really rocked the house. The young folks, not for their first look at the legends, weren't disappointed and naysayers were sent packing. (JS)

band is also putting the finishing touches on a video for the album's first single, "Skipping Son," which has been in production for the better part of a month. Add to that a slate of upcoming performances on the Vans Warped tour, a Canadian Music Week showcase and a bongload of cross-country touring and you've got a recipe for success.

Not to worry, though; even with all the business going on, these doods still know how to kick it. "Partying," snorts GhettoBlasters singer Jimmy Gregory. "That's totally what we fuckin' sell. It's about having a good time and not worrying about political correctness—we've been doing this a long time and we want everyone else to

have as good a time as we are."

The band's new record *Stink* was recorded under the watchful eye of local luminary Barry Allen at Homestead Recordings, a move that Gregory thinks resulted in a giant leap forward for the band. "On this album, we turned the suck way down and turned the stink up," he says. "I like recordings that are really raw and live-sounding, and I think we did it with this one." Written and recorded over the past 18 months, Gregory believes the album has the potential to deliver the band to a larger audience. "The last album really only had about four songs that really rocked hard," he says. "This one is at level 10 from the first track right until the end." (JS)



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Friday, May 21

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Friday May 28th

Pyjama Jammy Jam

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featuring Canada's largest pillow fight

Friday, June 4

Metropolis Recording Artists

IMPERATIVE REACTION

"Redemption Tour 2004"

w/ guests SYSTEM SYN

Friday June 11

Honest Don's/Fat Wreck Chords Artists

REAL

MCKENZIES

WEDNESDAY

NIGHT HEROES

HALF CUT



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3 Inches of Blood

The Organ w/ 7&7 is

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FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAY 20, 2004

1. Modest Mouse – Good News For People Who Love Bad News (epic)
2. Sarah Harmer – All Of Our Names (universal)
3. Angelique Kidjo – Oyalal (columbia)
4. The Wailin' Jennys – 40 Days (jericho beach)
5. Los Lobos – The Ride (hollywood)
6. Franz Ferdinand – Franz Ferdinand (domino)
7. Loretta Lynn – Van Lear Rose (interscope)
8. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings – Bark (true north)
9. The Beta Band – Heroes To Zeros (emi)
10. The George Bushes – Handsome (riverdale)
11. Harry Manx – West Eats Meat (dog my cat)
12. Radiohead – Com Lag (parlophone)
13. Eric Bibb, Rory Block & Maria Muldaur – Sisters & Brothers (telarc)
14. Mae Moore & Lester Quitza – Oh My! (plant & garden)
15. Various – Rock Against Bush (fat)
16. TV On The Radio – Desperate Youth, Blood Thirsty Babes (touch & go)
17. Murs – The 9th Edition (def jux)
18. The Pixies – Wave Of Mutilation: The Best Of (4ad)
19. Eric Clapton – Me & Mr. Johnson (reprise)
20. Morrissey – You Are The Quarry (sanctuary)
21. Sam Phillips – A Boot & A Shoe (nonesuch)
22. The Von Bondies – Pawn Shoppe Heart (sire)
23. Jolie Holland – Escondida (anti)
24. O.S.T. – The Triplets Of Belleville (virgin)
25. Livin' Lovin' Losin' – Songs Of The Lovin' Brothers (universal)
26. Fractal Pattern – No Hope But Mt. Hope (method)
27. Johnny Cash – The Man Comes Around (american)
28. The Postal Service – Give up (sub pop)
29. D12 – D12 World (shady)
30. Madvillain – Madvillainy (stones throw)

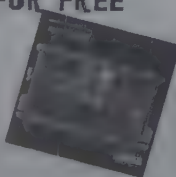
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THU

LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: The End, Ion Dissonance Main Room: "Slam", Jimmies.

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Patsy Amico and Brian Gregg; 9pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Terry Hanck

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Stars Tonight (Legends Tribute Show)

CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm

COOK COUNTY SALOON Battle of the Bands; 9pm; no cover

DUSTERS' PUB Jam hosted by Brian Petch

THE GRINDER Sinner Street (blues)

J.J.'S Open stage with cover items

J AND R BAR AND GRILL Open stage with the Poster Boys (blues/roots); 8:30pm-12:30am

KINGSNIGHT PUB The Sessions

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MARKEED CAFE Open stage

REXALL PLACE Merle Haggard, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, Colin Linden, Russell de Carle, tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000, Rexall Place box office

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Jimmy Whiffen

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Sam August

SIDETRACK CAFE Shikasta, Cripple Creek Fairies, The Taylor Dons; 9pm; \$7 (door)

STARLINE ROOM Thornley, Tupelo Honey (rock 'n' roll); 8pm (door)/9pm (show); \$16.30; tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

URBAN LOUNGE Mustard Smile; no cover

CLASSICAL

CAFÉ SELECT Bonnie Gregory and Rob Taylor (cello harp and guitar); 6:30-9pm

WINSTON CENTER Showcase: Robbins Lighter Classics presented by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra featuring soloists Martin Rieley (concertmaster), Susan Flook (violin), Evan Verchomin (viola), Colin Ryan (cello) and more. Franz Paul Decker (conductor); 8pm; tickets start at \$20, student/senior discounts available. \$15 student rush seating available from the box office one hour prior to concert, tickets available at Winsper box office 428-1108

DJS

THE REMINGTON 1000 Night; top 40

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Club rip hop and R&B Thursday nights

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Big Mouth Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE

THE REMINGTON 1000 Night; top 40

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Club rip hop and R&B Thursday nights

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Big Mouth Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE

Thump: intronica with the DDK Soundystem

COWBOYS House with Ryan Wade and guests (patio)

ELEPHANT AND CASTLE ON WHYTE Sleeman Method Thursday; hip hop, down-tempo with DJ Headspin

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Punk Rock Bingo; with DJ S.W.A.G.

GAS PUMP Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI DJ Jeff

LONGRIDERS Hot Latin Nights; free dance lessons 8-9:30pm

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Rub-A-Dub Thursday; rocksteady, dub reggae with DJ Jeetus and the Operation Redication Sound System

NEW CITY SUBURBS Progress; electro/new wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butter

RENDEZVOUS Metal Night; with DJ McNasty

THE ROOST Rotating shows: Ladonna's Review, Sticky's open stage and the Wakelet Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

RUM Hip hop with Shortround and Echo

SAVOY Funk w/ Bob Trampoline and Ben

THE STANDARD Spin Thursdays: House with Nestor Delano, Tripwisk, Luke Morrison (Connected Fusion Series)

STARS NIGHTCLUB Thursday/Sat: Jimmies and Deadly, Mizta, Hellfya, Sweetz, Atomatik, Ku

VELVET LOUNGE Substance: hip hop/R&B end of exams Jam with Spynicle, Invinible, J-Money, Sean B

YOUR APARTMENT Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk, '60s pop with DJs Travay and Alex Zwoil

FRI

LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: The Stars Here, 3 O'Clock Charlie, Amidean Main Room: Maniac, Sumo Cunt, Hell Thrasher, The Dirt Bags

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL O'Shamus

BLUES ON WHYTE Terry Hanck

CAPITAL HILL PUB Thomas Alexander Trio (blues)

CASINO (EDMONTON) Lisa Hewitt (unplugged-country)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Stars Tonight (Legends Tribute Show)

CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm

DUKE OF ARCADE PUB Mark Mcgarnie

DUSTERS PUB Watkins Glen; 9:30pm

EXPRESSIONZ CAFE Open stage hosted by Craig Shaler, 4-11pm

FATBOYZ Patsy Amico and Brian Gregg

FOUR ROOMS Bomba Trio

THE GRINDER Sinner Street (blues)

HONEST MUR'S The Hoffman-Brown Band; 9pm-1am; no cover

J.J.'S Righteous Mothers (rock)

LEGENDS PUB Big Jim Tino

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MEGATUNES 7 and 7 is (punk rock); 4pm

MICHAEL'S PUB The Shufflehound

NU WAVE The Shufflehound; 9pm-1am; no cover

PEPPERS

QUEEN ALEXANDRA HALL The End, Ion Dissonance

RED'S Sinclair, Lee Spoken, The Exceptions; no minors; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); free before 8pm/\$4 (after 7pm)

SEEDY'S The Grassroot Deviation, Tazi

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Jimmy Whiffen

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Richard Blais

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Sam August

SIDETRACK CAFE Carolyn Mark and New Best Friends (CD release party, The Rambin Ambassadors, The Silver Spurs; 9pm; \$7 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Mustard Smile; \$5

WESTBURY THEATRE Blazing Violets, And On, Victimless Crime, Rolodex, Perfect Blue, Rosetta Stone; \$8

YARDBIRD SUITE Brett Miles' Explosion; 8pm (door), 9pm (show; \$5 (member)/\$9 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

ZENARI'S Helena Magerowski

JEFFREY'S CAFE AND WINE BAR Jim Tigner and guests (jazz piano, horns); 7:30pm; \$11

KINGSNIGHT PUB Sugarbus

LEGENDS PUB Big Jim Tino

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MICHAEL'S PUB The Shufflehound

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Voice Industrie

NU WAVE The Shufflehound; 9pm-1am; no cover

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ZENARI'S Helena Magerowski

THE ARMOURY Top 40/dance

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Big Mouth Entertainment

BOOTS Retro Disco: retro dance

DANCEY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Arrowchaser

CAFÉ SELECT DJs Stacks and Tryptomene

CALETTE NIGHTCLUB Urban with Invinible, Q.B. and guests

COWBOYS Ladies Night: top 40

CRISTAL LOUNGE Ill: industrial noise, neo-classical with Verlaag and Xerxes

DANTE T WHEEL PUB Powernoise Fridays: dance and retro with Zack and Johnny Stub (Power 92); 10:30am; no cover

UPSTAIRS IN THE SKYLOUNGE soulful house music; over 23; dress code

DECADENCE Vital Fridays: Drums 'n' bass with Teebee (Norway), Degree, Phatacat, Dinow, Matt Hatter, Slim Pickens, Dreadnought, Heed, Chetto FX

DONNA Silk: house with Winston Roberts and guests

ELEPHANT AND CASTLE ON WHYTE DJ Headspin Live

ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE Freeds: Fridays; house, Euro house, club anthems with The Peoples DJ

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Shake Yo' Ass: with DJ Senal K

THE FOX Top 40 retro dance

GAS PUMP Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI DJ Jeff

HALO Mad Club: indie rock, new wave, '60s soul, Brit pop

JEFFREY'S CAFE AND WINE BAR Jim Tigner and guests (jazz piano, horns); 7:30pm; \$11

KINGSNIGHT PUB Sugarbus

LEGENDS PUB Big Jim Tino

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MEGATUNES 7 and 7 is (punk rock); 4pm

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ZENARI'S Helena Magerowski

with DJs Blue Jay and Travay D

IRON HORSE Urban Dance Party with DJ Loose Cannon

THE JOINT Fresh Fridays: Urban by Urban Metropolis Sound Crew

MANHATTAN CLUB R&B Fridays; hip hop/R&B with DJ Mad Noise

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL DJ Shawn Z

ORLANDO'S II PUB AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hill; 9pm

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butter

THE ROOST Upstairs: Euro Blitz: best new European music with DJ Outlawak, DJ Jazzy and male stripper;

DOWNSTAIRS female stripper; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Babylon Fridays: retro/R&B/dance with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Electronic with DJs Bryana, Chris

THE STANDARD Triple X Fridays; top 40/dance

STARS NIGHTCLUB Live music night with Brian

STONERHOUSE PUB Alternating: house, hip hop; top 40 with DJ Rage and DJ Weezy; 9pm

SUGARBOWL Listen: ambient/IDM/electronic by Ariel and Rael

3 X THERAPY House/breakbeat with Tripwisk, Sureshot, MC Floxo, LJ, Juicy, Dragon, Old Bitch

YOUR APARTMENT House with DJ Tomek

SAT

LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: Slam, Jimmies Main Room: Dirty Grooves, Quinn, Will O'Shamus

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL O'Shamus

BLACK DOG Har of the Dog; 4-6pm

BLING P&B PUB AND GRILL Open Stage; 3-9:30pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Terry Hanck

BUDD'S LOUNGE Open stage every Sat; 7:30-11:30pm

CAPITAL HILL PUB Thomas Alexander Trio (blues)

CASINO (EDMONTON) Lisa Hewitt (unplugged-country)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Stars Tonight (Legends Tribute Show)

CASTLE ROCK PUB Patsy Amico and Brian Gregg

CHRISTOPHER'S Mr. Lucky (blues, roots); 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover

DRUM HARP Dargod Brown; 3-7pm

DUPONT OF ARCADE PUB Mark Mcgarnie

DUSTERS PUB Watkins Glen; 9:30pm

FOUR ROOMS Bomba Trio

THE GRINDER Sinner Street (blues)

HONEST MUR'S The Hoffman-Brown Band; 9pm-1am; no cover

J.J.'S Righteous Mothers (rock)

LEGENDS PUB Big Jim Tino

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MEGATUNES 7 and 7 is (punk rock); 4pm

MICHAEL'S PUB The Shufflehound

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SIDETRACK CAFE Carolyn Mark and New Best Friends (CD release party, The Rambin Ambassadors, The Silver Spurs; 9pm; \$7 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Mustard Smile; \$5

WESTBURY THEATRE Blazing

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the Real McKenzies

WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES

HALF CUT

EDMONTON

MUSIC

Kirkish delight

They're not dead, Jim: the James T. Kirks resurface for 10th anniversary show

By PHIL DUPERRON

More than a decade ago, three landlocked Albertan farm boys were brought together by their love of surf music to form the James T. Kirks. Okay, two of them—brothers Rob and Ted Wright—were already bonded by blood and the third, drummer Silas Grenis, had been hanging around for long enough to qualify as an unofficial family member. And surf music was only one of several genres flowing through their musical veins from a very young age.

"We were raised on rock 'n' roll in our house," says bassist Rob. "There was so many different albums in our dad's house that we pilfered. Chuck Berry was huge when I was in grade five and Buddy Holly and stuff like that. At the same time I was getting into that stuff, I was listening to Black Flag and stuff like the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Sonic Youth, Nirvana and all kinds of different things that were flipping my lid." At the same time, he was listening to the fast and furious instrumental music of Huevos Rancheros and the psychobilly freakouts of the Reverend Horton Heat via late-night CBC radio broadcasts and early mornings spent with his ears glued to CJSR. "It all sort of blended together into what the James T. Kirks became," Rob says.

Unfortunately, after jamming in Grenis's barn for awhile, the young drummer's mom cut his surf dreams short and made him quit the band. The band soldiered on with several dif-

ferent drummers, recorded a few live bootlegs, toured Canada and finally called it quits. Rob and Ted took some of the embryonic vocal tunes they'd been working on and eventually formed Les Tabernacles, and they've been kicking out some serious rock under that banner ever since. But there must have been a need to revisit the reverb-heavy instrumental surf rock of their youth and the band got together with the original lineup almost two years ago. "When we decided to get together for those reunion gigs it only seemed right to have Silas play drums," says Rob.

TED GOES ONE STEP FURTHER and says no one else was foolish enough to take up the sticks for them. "Any drummer we've had in the past died horrible deaths," he explains. "Like,

PREVIEW ROCK

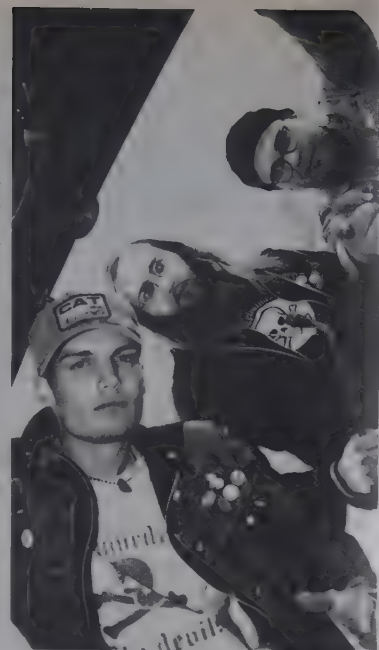
exploding into flames spontaneously, so there's nobody really left for us except Silas. So we gave him the call." Those early reunion shows were just a lark, but they led to something meaningful. "We were having such a good time," Ted says. "The songs were standing up still and we were writing new songs, so we figured we might as well give 'er a fifth go, I guess."

Other than a track on the compilation *Edmonton Rocks* and several hard-to-find, privately recorded bootlegs, the James T. Kirks haven't

released an album—yet. "We've just been too fucking lazy and the band broke up for four years," explains Ted. "We also wanted to have a chance to come up with some new songs as well. People have been asking for it now and we're happy with the way the band is going, so we'll definitely have something by the end of the year."

For now, folks will have to settle for a giant Hawaiian-themed 10th anniversary bash to get their fill of prairie surf rock. "It's a good excuse to wear your best lei and grass skirt," Ted says, "and throw on a set of coconuts for all the ladies who are able to fill them out." ☉

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root down

BY JENNY FENIAK

The washboard jungle

Washboard Hank • With Uncle Thirsty (a.k.a. Lance Loree) • Glitter Gulch at the Black Dog Freehouse • Wed, May 26 Over the last two and a half decades, Washboard Hank has honed his craft as the Canadian one-man band, playing everything from kazoo and duck calls to the "Fallopian tuba." And, as he puts it, "It all happened one night in London."

Hank's first marriage had just ended and, after finishing a fine meal at his favourite Chinese restaurant ("not too far from the railroad tracks, so you know they're good," he says), he received a fortune he'd never forget. "It said, 'Do not despair for you will be happy.' So I thought, 'Well, that's good,' and 'What does this mean?'"

Walking home down an alleyway, as is his habit, he spotted a tuba case and figured that'd be quite the instrument to play. Even though all it held was a bunch of human hair, it was enough to set Hank on fate's path. "That put the thought in my head of a tuba," he says, "and this was well before I started writing poetry or thinking about music at all. I just had this thought in my head that a tuba was somewhere in my future."

That was 1976, it would be another two years before his friend Reverend Ken began putting Hank's poetry to music. "Everyone really liked [my writing]," Hank recalls, "so I was overcome with curiosity to see the reaction of people to my poetry or lyrics or whatever. So, I found a washboard and I

became Washboard Hank."

At that point, his musical abilities at that point didn't go beyond a few guitar chords. His skills improved, though, and a few years later while he was playing the streets of North America as one of Reverend Ken's Lost Followers, Hank spotted what he was certain was a tuba in a snowbank. Alas, it turned out to be nothing more than a kitchen sink. But Hank was undaunted. "I picked it up," he says, "and looked at it and thought, 'Well, I could do this.'" He was kicked out of numerous plumbing supply stores before eventually buying 16 feet of PVC piping which he combined with the sink to create the first-ever Fallopian tuba.

Reverend Ken fell in love in Vancouver after the band played Expo '86, so for the next 10 years, the group became Washboard Hank and the Honkers. Even though his career was booming, the act had become repetitive and Hank felt he was in a rut. So in 1997, he joined Fred Eaglesmith's band the Flying Squirrels

Even though all it held was a bunch of human hair, it was enough to set Hank on fate's path

and spent the next four years playing every city in North America once again. But as the band grew, Hank found his washboard was competing with a "rock 'n' roll drummer that just wouldn't shut up," so Hank went his own way. Then he ran into Lance Loree in Calgary, almost two decades after first meeting him while playing the streets.

While chatting, the guys discovered they were born only a day apart

and a birthday gig was the order of the day. "Oh boy!" Hank exclaims. "After the first set I knew that Lance was the guy for me 'cause, well, he's a great country and rockabilly picker, plus he's got a great sense of humour. And y'know, I've played with a number of guitar players over the years and usually they can play anguish and anger really well, but they can't play happy and funny worth a shit."

The next year, with Ronnie Hayward on stand-up bass, Washboard Hank and the Country Squires recorded their debut album *Hooray for Washboard Hank*. Hank, who still occasionally sits in with Eaglesmith as "the Uncle Buck of the band," signed a distribution deal with Eaglesmith's own A-Major Label last year to release his album. "I was willing to sign with Fred just because I know how Fred does things, but generally, the music industry people are pretty useless," says Hank, who's still working to get the album released south of the border.

"The distribution people seem to be typical professional music people in that they're lazy, fucked-up assholes."

The album is available in Canada, but for now Hank's focusing on his 2004 New Year's resolution to make a children's album. With at least three other band projects underway, including the Gravestone Lickers in his hometown of Peterborough, Ontario and the Hillbilly Hotdogs out in Nova Scotia, Hank just needs to find a little free time to commit his tunes to tape before the year is out. ☺



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CAROLYN MARK THE PROS AND CONS OF COLLABORATION

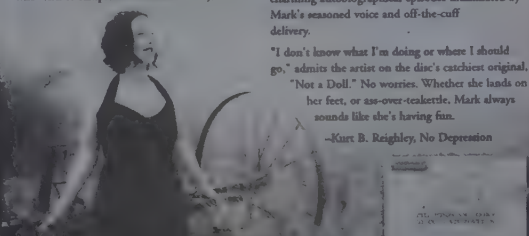
Carolyn Mark, the rootin'-tootin' roots music darling of Victoria, BC, does little to dispel the longstanding myth that booze consumption and creativity go hand-in-hand. Roughly half the songs on her third full-length address drinking, from a tongue-twisting distillate about men who favour white wine ("The Wine Song," inspired by Nick Lowe) to the repentant finale "Hangover," complete with banged-up piano and a head-bung-low sing-along. Mark even includes a recipe in the liner notes, for those who wish to sample the Bourbon Decay, the

libation mentioned in the rollicking "2 Days Smug and Sober."

But there's more to Mark than just the smartass who can fire off internal rhymes for "gewurtztraminer." Pros and Cons, which features lively accompaniment from the New Best Friends (which includes longtime cohort Tolan McNeil on guitar as well as violinist Diana Davies of Po'Girl), also doubles as a scrapbook of Mark's misadventures. "Chantal and Leroy," "Yanksgiving," and the stripped-down "Jody and Sue" (with backing vocals by Kelly Hogan) are charming autobiographical episodes illuminated by Mark's seasoned voice and off-the-cuff delivery.

"I don't know what I'm doing or where I should go," admits the artist on the disc's catchiest original, "Not a Doll." No worries. Whether the hands on her feet, or ass-over-teakettle, Mark always sounds like she's having fun.

—Kurt B. Reighley, No Depression



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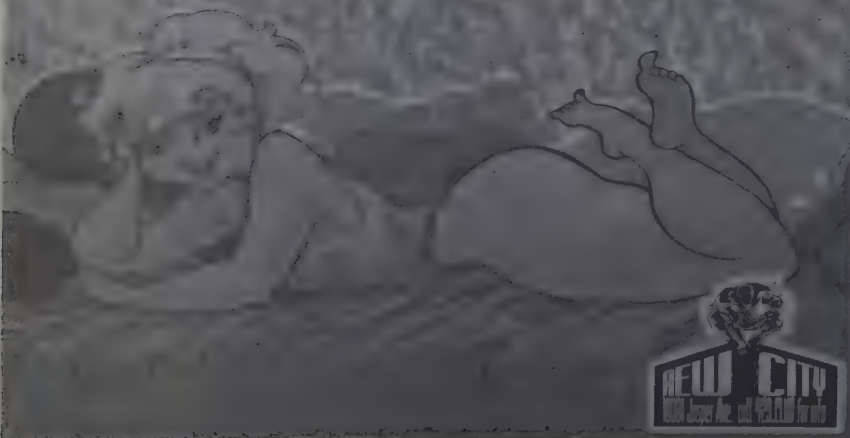
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MUSIC



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By DAVID STONE

A Voice is silenced

You might not notice it, but there's a bit of a changing of the guard taking place in town this weekend. It's very subtle, and it reflects how clubbing has shifted in the last decade. Tonight (Thursday) at the Standard, Connected Entertainment is entering another

round of their annual **Fashion Series** with a spotlight this evening on Holt Renfrew and Evelyn Charles. It's chic, posh and fueled by some pulsing house music supplied by residents Nestor Delano and Tripswitch.

Then on Friday, local electronica group **Voice Industrie** is calling it a day with a final bash at New City. For the past decade, they've been one of the vanguards of tough, industrial-strength beats, playing in the face of every rock 'n' roll trend that's come down the pipe. From their early performances at the long-gone Dance Factory to their last album, *Power*, they bridged the gap between new wave and techno, bringing Goths to the rave and leading them back out again.

It's too bad to see guys like Voice Industrie leaving the scene, but there's a new generation of artists, DJs and promoters who have spent the last few years working hard and slowly transforming the local club landscape. When VI started playing, there were few, if any, clubs willing to take a chance with progressive club beats. Now there's at least one place on every night of the week doing something that's underground and groovy.

This Friday at Decadance, Subterranean Sound is trying once again with a drum 'n' bass night with Vital, kicking things off in style with Norwegian masterblaster **TeeBee**. The broken beat style isn't something that's really caught on as a regular club thing, but check out the basement at Y After-hours on a Friday night and listen to people go off to a dude like Sureshock, who rinses the plates with heart. Or

check out the hype surrounding the upcoming Dieselboy mix album *The Dungeonmaster's Guide*, which will feature a track from local producer Cartridge. Perhaps there's a revolution afoot, and nobody's going to be paying attention until it's too late.

The city is also becoming a prime stop for a fresh stream of international talent, it seems. On June 1, Canadian tech-house ambassador **John Acquaviva** is back after a lengthy absence, setting up his Final Scratch gear at the Globe, followed by the return of superstar trance jock **Tiesto** at Escape Ultra Lounge on June 8. The Dutchman is on the road promoting his upcoming artist album *Just Be*, and Edmonton is only one of his four stops in Canada, so all credit is due to United Productions for managing to swing the man back into town for the benefit of his ecstatic fans.



John Acquaviva

Outdoor festivals seem to be making a comeback as well. In summers past, the season has been dominated by Motion Notion, Shambala and Summer of Love, but there are a couple more to add onto this year's calendar. On June 4, 5 and 6, a new group calling themselves the Lost Tribe, along with other promo companies like Foosh, So Called and United, has put together a co-operative effort called **The Gathering of The Tribes** that will take place at a location an hour outside the city. Headlining the bash will be Jay Tripwire, Brad Copeland and D-Monic along with more Alberta hotshots than you'll know what to do with. Tickets are available at Foosh or through the Lost Tribe website at www.losttribe.ca.

The other festival is a modest bash called **Eargasm 2**, which will take place on June 26. It's at a secret location as well—but closer to town, I'm assured—and builds itself around an elite bunch of proven local DJs. There's a limited number of tickets available at Foosh, and every ticket includes an exclusive Eargasm CD.

And finally, I've just heard that **Felix Da Housecat** is making his Edmonton debut on June 24 at the Standard. This is why summer in the city rules. ●

BAD RELIGION

THE EMPIRE STRIKES FIRST



In Stores
June 8





street vision

BY SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

The man who runs the DMC

The **DMC DJ Mixing Championships** have a unique relationship with our fair city. Over the last three years, the international turntablist competition has seen events cancelled, trails blazed and venues switched. And just over a week ago, dmcworld.ca announced the cancellation of the Edmonton stage of the annual battle, which was set to take place this month.

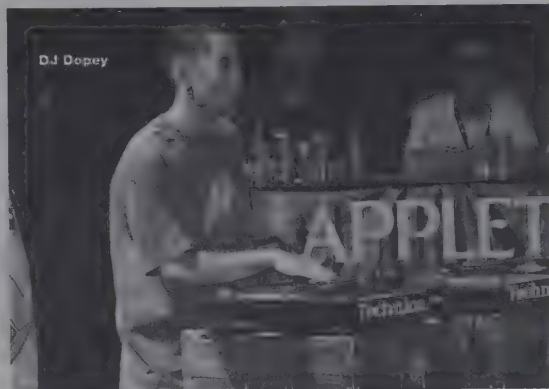
Chris Kendall, manager for North American DMC, says it's a shame when cities the size of Edmonton miss out on events like this, but it's up to the community as a whole to show support. At least we've got it better than Saskatoon, Kendall says. Despite his best efforts, that city hasn't seen a DMC competition in more than seven years.

This development seemed all-too-familiar. Only two years ago, the DMCs' Edmonton heat was also cancelled on short notice. But this year's disappointment has a happier ending. Brent Oliver, entertainment manager for the Sidetrack Café, has picked up the event, moved its date to June 23, changed the location and added some more value to the ticket price. No longer will the annual competition be held at Red's, the venue where DJ Reece became the first female DJ to advance to the Canadian finals last year. Instead, the smaller, cozier Sidetrack will be offering up its space to accommodate Edmonton's clan of turntablists. Local hip-hop collective Darkson Tribe will serve as hosts for the evening.

Kendall says that Edmonton's DJ

talent has always measured up against entrants from the rest of the country. "Last year, Reece well represented Edmonton at the Canadian final," he says. "She didn't place in the top three, but she didn't embarrass herself or her city, there's no question. She had skills, she had quality parts of her routine and her competitors treated her as an equal."

Kendall says Oliver's doing a great job at putting together a quality show in a short amount of time, and that he looks forward to seeing who the Edmonton judges will send to Winnipeg for the national finals this year.



(Check out www.dmcwinnipeg.net for more details.) "I contacted Brent after I got the referral from... *Exclaim!* magazine," Kendall says. "Within an hour, Brent had faxed back the contract; within two hours, the club's site had all of the updated information about it. He talks it, and I think he walks it."

Oliver's still looking for a few DJs to fill some slots in the competition. Those interested can contact him through the club or via e-mail (brent@sidetrackcafe.com). Though the turnout at the DMC is always uncertain, he confirms that the event is important not only for local DJs, but for the hip-hop scene as a whole—

especially now that Jazz City has added it to its official calendar. Yes, that means you can get in with a Jazz City wristband. "I'm hoping this is a great shot in the arm," he says. "The DMCs are a big deal to me. It's the only time for a lot of these DJs to actually shine. They go straight from their bedrooms to a stage, and I'm hoping that this keeps fostering positive support for the scene."

After last year's competition surrendered the limelight to an overhyped and underorganized MC battle, Oliver says he's more than happy to bring the focus back to the jockeys. Oliver's no

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MUSIC



classical notes

BY ALLISON KYDD

Knockin' on Eddins' door

Despite his journeyman appearance in shirt and suspenders, his sleeves rolled up to the elbow, double bassist Edgar Meyer gave a masterly performance in last weekend's Edmonton Symphony Orchestra Masters Series and earned several standing ovations for his efforts.

The applause was well-deserved. Meyer had introduced a world of new possibilities, from toe-curling low notes (the instrument had been modified slightly, with an extended bottom string and fingerboard moved closer to the bridge) to high and fluty cadenzas. Meyer held court through a concerto by Giovanni Bottesini (who composed extensively for the double bass in the mid-1800s) and another of his own composition.

William Eddins, resident conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was another crowd-pleaser. If it is every conductor's job to dance before the audi-

ence, his body was the electrical charge between music and the orchestra, orchestra and audience. First, Stravinsky's hectic *Jeux de cartes* ("The Card Game") *Ballet in Three Deals* had all the excitement and reversals one might expect from such a subject and featured novel effects from ESO regulars, such as timpanist Barry Nemish and tuba player Scott Whetham. The concert booked the intermission. Finally, Eddins tossed away the score and played Beethoven's Symphony No. 8 in F Major from memory.

The Davis Sunday Showcase on May 16 also had Eddins "shakin' his tailfeathers"—Linda Tillery would approve—on the podium. Two weeks before, violinist Edmond Agopian of Calgary conducted the Canadian Chamber Orchestra from his concertmaster's chair. Eddins also makes a habit of conducting from the

a number of earlier works, such as a fanfare intended to call the audience to their seats after intermissions. Gilliland says he's "never one to throw anything away," and there it was. Mini-solos by ESO principals Martin Riseley and Nora Bumanis brought to mind the concertos he had written for Riseley and Duo Paragon (Bumanis and her Stratford, Ontario counterpart, Julia Shaw).

Samuel Barber's *Toccata Festiva for Organ, Trumpet, Timpani and String* featured organist Jeremy Spurgeon, principal trumpet Alvin Lowrey, plus Nemish again. The piece had lots of drama, but was there a reed out of tune? Even magnificent beasts such as the Davis Concert Organ are sensitive to temperature change.

The highlight of the weekend for many was the "Rach III" (Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor), popularized by the film *Shine*. Rising Canadian pianist Katherine Chi, winner of the 2000 Honens International Piano

Even magnificent beasts such as the Davis Concert Organ are sensitive to temperature change

orchestra. On Sunday, he played the harpsichord for Handel's Organ Concerto No. 13 in F Major ("The Cuckoo and the Nightingale"), and whenever the score gave him a rest, his hands were dancing in the air.

The Sunday concert also included a world premiere of Allan Gilliland's final work as composer-in-residence for the ESO. He graciously dedicated his composition, *Above the Fold*, to the orchestra, and the work itself was both tribute and retrospective. It referred to

Competition, proved that the ultimate virtuosic challenge for pianists can be elegantly mastered by a woman.

Speaking of powerful women who are also pianists, Alexandra Munn, former professor at the University of Alberta and now a mainstay of the Conservatory of Music, reunites with former pod-mate violinist Frank Ho for a concert at Convocation Hall on Saturday, May 22. (The fifth floor of the Conservatory is divided into enclaves of two or three studios, or "pods.") Symphony-goers will remember Munn's vivacious introduction of piano legend Anton Kuerti back in January.

Yet more from the ESO: on Thursday, May 20, many of the orchestra's principals and assistant principals including new principal French horn Allene Hackleman strut their stuff. This year's principal guest conductor Franz Paul Decker is on the podium.

This weekend also launches Opera Nuova's Canadian Vocal Arts Festival. The festival runs for a month and incorporates numerous concerts, showcases and lectures. Passes are available. ●

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Mark

Carolyn Mark applied the scientific method to her Dionysian new disc

By LISA GREGOIRE



To prepare for recording her third solo CD at home with bandmate and man of cunning Tolan McNeil at the controls, Carolyn Mark bought six white lab coats, stitched six hand-embroidered namepatches above the left breast and filled the pockets with cigarettes, money, phone cards and 2004 calendars. Satisfied that would keep her rambling minstrels stationary for a while, she talked some friends into rotating chef duties for two weeks, rationed the hooch to one two-four of Pilsner and a bottle of wine a day (give or take a few) and leapt into a Dionysian home experiment in music and merrymaking.

Mark hypothesized that while she may lack the cash to pay her collaborators what they were actually worth, she could make up for it by injecting the experiment with compensatory doses of tomfoolery and amusement. The results, *The Pros and Cons of Collaboration*, credited to "Carolyn Mark and the New Best Friends" and released this month by Mint Records, proves what we always knew: the little farm girl from Sicamous is truly mad and that we all wish we were her new best friends.

"I made it fun and they liked that—and I think they like the music," Mark says over the phone from her rental in Victoria, the sound of children playing in the schoolyard across the street audible in the background. Mark spies a photographer setting up benches and a tripod for "picture day," a sight that sparks shared memories

of awkward adolescence and teenage stints working at McDonald's. That's Carolyn: always ready with a good story.

It's her stories, really, which compel us to hang on her every word. *Pros and Cons*, like *Party Girl* and *Terrible Hostess* before it, is full of the sinfully clever tales we've come to expect from Carolyn Mark. She is, I swear, the secret love child of Charles Bukowski and Loretta Lynn: Seattle's *The Stranger* once dubbed her "Drunk of the Week" and *Pros and Cons* claims to have been brought to you by FACMPUS, the Foundation to Afford Canadian Musicians the Privilege of Uncontrolled Substances. But she's deeper than the endless jokes and one-liners that issue from those lipstick lips. This new CD should finally dispel the notion that Mark is just a novelty act and prove her worth among Canada's premier songwriters.

PROS AND CONS STARTS with an overture—a brilliant old-fashioned, big-screen collage containing riffs and choruses from each of the disc's 10 songs—and ends with that same overture overdubbed with the best album credits I've heard. ("You know," the stentorian announcer says at one point, "it's been said, behind every good woman, you'll find six to 10 men working their nuts off. Or to put it another way, it takes a village to make an idiot.") In between are naughty ballads, drink recipes, country blues and advice for the gals (steer clear of white wine drinkers). It contains

the usual peppering of Edmonton references, including a chorus at the end of "Hangover" supplied by our very own Black Dog Freehouse Choir. Edmonton, it so happens, is where Mark finds her most ardent fans. She'd consider moving here but doesn't think her liver could take it. "My doctor has advised against it," she says.

"Jody and Sue," a tribute to a couple of Edmonton friends, is a slower tune but one of the disc's most engaging tracks. Describing the familiar drive from Vancouver to Edmonton, she croons, "A grey and gold road is a filmstrip fed through

PREVIEW ROOTS

the windshield 'neath a sky of Dream Whip UFOs." The chorus aptly captures the drone of being on the road too long: "We are still and yet still we are moving."

We talk about the journey: "There's the way it gets flat after the mountains," she says, pausing to recall the elements. "The way the light changes. People in Edmonton, they wait up all night with their liquor cabinets open and their beds made for me." To round out the E-town theme, she covers "Slept All Afternoon," a song by old chum and mentor Mike McDonald who introduced her and her old band, the Vinalgrettes, to Edmonton about 10 years ago. She'll never forgive him for that.

The recording process took about two weeks. Besides her new

best friends—Ford Pier on key-boards, Tolan McNeil on guitar, Paul Rigby on bass, Gregory Macdonald on percussion and Diona Davies on violin and cello—Miss Mark lured more than a half-dozen other singers, ukulele players (ukulelists?), guitarists, string players and drummers to her basement lair to fill up the extra places with twangs and shouts and da-da-das. The re-release of "Not a Doll," for instance, includes a winsome closing chorus which layers harmonies one by one before a fade-out. A faster version of the song appears on the 1998 live Corn Sisters CD *The Other Woman*. This version, one of the CD's strongest tracks, is slower, allowing choice lines like "Everything happens either not at all or at the same time" to breathe and linger.

SO HOW DID the lab coats go over?

Not everyone wore them right off, but eventually Mark's collaborators succumbed to the spirit of science. McNeil needed no prompting, completing the ensemble with pyjama bottoms and cowboy boots, says Mark. Every day. Since Davies was absent in the beginning, Mark did have to endure a house full of boys and a lot of jokes about farts and testicles. When Davies arrived, she says, the two ladies tried to fight fire with fire and crack a few boob jokes, but they just didn't have the same impact.

Composing the overture was no piece of cake—and if it weren't for the youthful exuberance of Gregory Macdonald, it might never have

been completed. Mark says she made the mistake of idly mentioning her overture idea to Macdonald who then asked almost daily when they could start work on it. Modulating keys and arranging song samples took the better part of a day with eventual help from Rigby and Paul Pigat who, after feigning disinterest, shouted out transition chords from another room whenever Mark and Macdonald got stuck.

Mark is currently primping her sexy self for an upcoming tour, having just returned from a stint in Ontario playing with Kelly Hogan and Corn Sister Neko Case for the opening of *Lipstick and Dynamite*, a film about female wrestlers. (The three ladies contributed a song to the soundtrack.) Mark was a tad anxious about learning the overture for her upcoming shows and trying not to fret, like she does after every new recording, about whether the songwriting well has finally dried up. "I always think, 'That's it. Maybe I have no more songs left,'" she says. "It drives me crazy. But I always do." It may soon get more difficult. Mark says she can only write songs when she's alone and reflective. With the throngs of people now wanting to ride her coat-tails (or just nail them to the floor), some future "quiet time" seems about as likely as a bored bartender at a Carolyn Mark show. ●

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- 4) **GUNS N' ROSES**
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ELEPHUNK
- 6) **JONES, NORAH**
FEELS LIKE HOME
- 7) **D12**
D12 WORLD (EXPLICIT)
- 8) **HOOBASTANK**
REASON
- 9) **MAROON 5**
SONGS ABOUT JANE
- 10) **LYNN, LORETTA**
VAN LEAR ROSE

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NEW SOUNDS

CLUTCH
BLAST TYRANT
(EMI)

It's hard to type after listening to the latest Clutch album; my arms are so tired from playing air drums and air guitar that it's hard to punch the keys. *Blast Tyrant* is a thick slab of rock 'n' roll goodness; while Clutch's previous efforts put the band near the top of the stoner-rock heap, this new record worships at the altar of Black Sabbath, with strong hints of the rock jams you might find at an old Deep Purple or Led Zep show. If Clutch once made music to smoke pot to while driving a muscle car, *Blast Tyrant* is for chevin' on 'shrooms while slumming in the rear of your shaggin' wagon, vallyries painted on the sides and all.

"Cypress Grove," on which the guitarists play a rhythm pattern borrowed from '70s funk, is the early pick for rock song of the year. But "Profits of Doom" and "Promoter (of Earth-Bound Causes)" are also must-listens for anyone who believes there's no such thing as bad fuzz. Neil Fallon continues to sing about

demons, goblins, myths and muscle cars, but his stoner-rock bent takes a new twist in "The Mob Goes Wild," which offers the following bit of political commentary: "Condoleezza Rice is nice but I prefer A-Roni." Now if that isn't rock 'n' roll genius, I dare you to find me something better. (Oh, and later in the song he begs the mob to move to Canada and smoke lots of pot—I Am Canadian, huh!) If you haven't grown mutton chops and a Fu Manchu mustache only minutes after hitting "play," there's something wrong with you—and that goes for the ladies too. ★★★★★—STEVEN SANDOR

ARMAND VAN HELDEN
NEW YORK: A MIX ODYSSEY
(SOUTHERN FRIED/SPG)

In the "make nice" world of dance music, Armand Van Helden, to his credit, hasn't been afraid of pissing people off, or at least challenging conventions. An infamous gig in Ibiza a few years ago saw him playing old school hip-hop to a crowd expecting the house numbers like "Witch Doktor" or "Flowerz" he'd made

his name with. He got booed offstage. Time will also probably be kinder to his more experimental albums *Killing Puritans* and the more egomaniacal *Ghandi Khan*. Still, if there were any doubt about Van Helden's skills as a DJ or producer, or his affection for dance music past and present, *New York: A Mix Odyssey* is proof positive he is indeed the man.

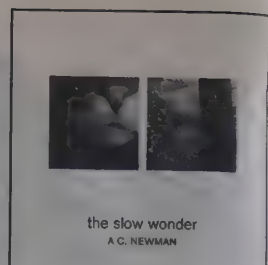
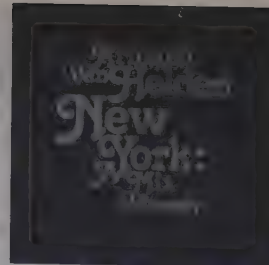
In making the definitive NYC tribute, Van Helden has also created what might be the most successful pop-to-electronic crossover mix ever. Thanks to the inclusion of many original, unedited proto-dance tunes and modern riffs on older themes, *A Mix Odyssey* is a funky and fun dance clash mash-up and a great intro mix for people who say they don't dig on dance. The mix kicks off with the nu-wave and punk riffs of Blondie's "Call Me" before looping the mix into Van Helden's own indie rock dabbling with Spalding Rockwell on "Hear My Name." More classics come courtesy of Yazoo's "Don't Go," the high-octane rockability of Ram Jam's "Black Betty," Soft Cell's "Tainted Love," the Romantics' "Talking in Your Sleep" and Company B's "Fasci-

nated." Two more of Van Helden's new singles, including more modern fare from Felix Da Housecat, Aloud, Arthur Baker and Dave Clarke round out this utterly superb *Odyssey*—bring it Homer with you today. ★★★★★—YURI WUENSCHE

A.C. NEWMAN
THE SLOW WONDER
(THE BLUE CURTAIN)

Few bands are more aptly named than the New Pornographers, who pack each of their songs with so many irresistible hooks that each one is like a pop-music orgy. And yet, numbers like "Letter From an Occupant" and "The Laws Have Changed" feel so pure, so joyful that, unlike an orgy, you feel no guilt at all about participating in the fun. There's probably a specialized word for the guy who hosts an orgy, but if there isn't, I propose that he be called the "newman," after New Pornographers mastermind A.C. Newman.

Newman's got a new solo record out called *The Slow Wonder*, and it's less of an orgy than a tailgate party. He's still work-



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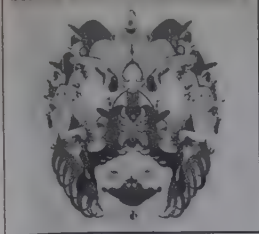
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top 10 sellers

01. good news for... modest mouse	06. misery is a butterfly blonde redhead
02. silence yesterday's new quintet (medib)	07. on off on mission of burma
03. inches less savy' law	08. pain bonds the double
04. our endless number days iron & wine	09. rejoicing in the hands devendra banhart
05. s/t no hands	10. madvillainy madvillain

GOMEZ SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE



ing with a sizable number of collaborators (including cellist Megan Bradfield, who's used to great effect on the propulsive "The Town Halo"), but despite Newman's knack for catchy hooks, the disc feels significantly more subdued than his work with the Pornographers. Call this disc *The Acoustic Version*: songs like "Drink to Me, Babe, Then" and "Come Crash" have an intimate, strummy feel that combines well with Newman's knotty lyrics. Still, my favourite tracks are the wall-of-sound power-poppers like "On the Table." It's great to see Newman showing a different side of himself, but what can I say? Thumbing through a coffeetable book like *The Slow Wonder* only makes me anxious for another dose of Pornography. ★★ ★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

GOMEZ SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE (VIRGIN)

There comes a time in every band's life when it reaches a crossroads—the members can choose to continue playing songs in the same style as before, or they can decide to change things up, risking the alienation of fans and record company alike.

Gomez decided to go for the road less traveled; long known for extended jams and everything-but-the-kitchen-sink arrangements, the band had always taken pop music to the most grandiose of levels. But with *Split the Difference*, not only has Gomez decided to drop all the extra production, but the songwriting has also moved away from pop and in a very decidedly rock 'n' roll direction. From the guitar screeches of the lead track, "Do One," to the almost-downtuned-enough-to-be-stoner-rock power chords of "We Don't Know Where We're Going," it's evident that the band are celebrating a change in direction, and having a great time doing it too.



KYP HARNESS

THE MIRACLE BUSINESS

"These 3 Sins," on which the band takes on a bit of American bluegrass, is their only deviation from the rock path, but even that song gives you the impression that it didn't take Gomez more than three takes to get it right. No, it's not a three-chord album, but it's the band's most focused effort to date. ★★ ★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

SCISSOR SISTERS SCISSOR SISTERS (POLYDOR)

Scissor Sisters is one of those bands that demands every one of its members dress up in a ridiculous costume and adopt an even more ridiculous name. Open up the CD booklet for their self-titled debut album and you can see a picture of a woman named "Ana Matronic" dolled up in a Stevie Nicks dress with a boa apparently made up of faux-fur tribbles draped over her arm; she's standing next to a guy who calls himself "Jake Shears" wearing ripped mesh leggings, ripped leather pants and a ripped mesh T-shirt showing off his ripped ab muscles. And some ostrich feathers on his shoulders.

But once the music starts playing, image doesn't matter—no matter how much it makes you want to roll your eyes. (As the Sisters themselves put it on one of their best tracks, "You can't see tits on the radio.") And the 11 tracks on this disc have a microwaved '70s prog-dance sound that's just about unbeatable. The Sisters are probably best-known right now for their cover of Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb," but they're perfectly capable of coming up with terrific hooks all on their own: the Sisters perform "Take Your Mama," "Music Is the Victim" and "Filthy/Gorgeous" with the sassy confidence of a band that thinks it's already conquered the world. The falsetto vocals border on Elton John camp, but the material on this disc is strong enough to

convince me that Scissor Sisters really is a serious band; they're just wearing a dumb band's costumes. ★★ ★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

KYP HARNESS THE MIRACLE BUSINESS (PORTERBEACH)

Most musicians keep on making music, regardless of whether anyone's listening. Kyp Harness does you one better: he keeps releasing records, regardless of how many people notice. Acclaimed in indie circles as one of Canada's top hidden singer/songwriter gems, Toronto-based Harness put out half a dozen albums between 1991 and 2002, culminating in 2002's *Floating World* double disc, featuring Dale Morningstar's *The Dinner Is Ruined* supergroup as the house band on one of the CDs. Not content to rest up, he's followed it with this spring's *The Miracle Business*, more vintage Harness.

And what exactly is vintage Kyp Harness? It's his raspy, Dylanesque vocals, his gritty first-person narratives and defeated everyman persona, his cynical observations about the impending urban apocalypse, his musical experimentation (with horns, this time)—and the winking hint of optimism that accompanies his songs, driven along by the beat and electric guitar, the redemption and refuge he seems to find in creation. By turns biblical ("Horseman") and cheeky ("Little Jerk"), Harness always profound, but in a subtle way, as in his poetic deconstruction of the finer points of love on "Soft Blue Gaze." Nothing on *The Miracle Business* comes together perfectly—there is no hit single here—but falling one step short is probably a pretty apt metaphor for a guy who seems destined to keep on walking. In "Passing Through," he sings "I'm on my way/I've got a job to do/Got a feeling that I won't know what it is/Till after it's all through." ★★ ★★ —DAN RUBINSTEIN

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QUICK SPINS

BY WHITEY AND T.B. PLAYER

Pony Da Look The Forcefield Weakens (Independent)

You are from Canada, why are you singing like Morrissey? Oh I see, it's to disguise an egregious lack of talent. Hmmm... What? Oh you're actually a photographer. I see. What's that? Yes, yes, you should probably invest in a drum machine.

Lenny Kravitz Baptism (Virgin)

Fuck off, you pompous windbag! Are you kidding me? "I Don't Want To Be A Star" my ass, everything about this guy screams "LOOK AT ME! LOOK AT ME! I'M FUCKING LENNY KRAVITZ, A BIG HUGE, POINTY, ASSHOLE ROCK-STAR!" From the André 3000 treatment to the heavily photoshopped shirtless cover shot. Dude, you look like an icecream! Seriously!

The Hiss Panic Movement (Sanctuary)

Well all right, now were talkin'. Smells like some decent blue-collar rock 'n' roll, the polar opposite of pointy old Lenny Kravitz. I mean, that guy actually has the sack to croon "All I need is my Chevy and my old guitar." I call BULLSHIT! BULLSHIT, LENNY! BULLSHIT ON YOU! That's right, I can see you, Lenny, smashing toilets in hotel lobbies and spending \$800 dollars on shoelaces! I CAN SEE YOU! You aren't fooling anyone!

The Organ Grab That Gun (Mint)

Driving bass and drums plus jangly guitars plus minimalist synths plus melancholic (but not whiny) vocals equals head-bobbin' '80s New Wave goodness. Not unlike an all-girl version of the Cure, but with less makeup and no hightops.



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War and Greece

Lack of epic themes and characters is *Troy*'s Achilles heel

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

Troy is not good. I didn't really know what to expect from it beyond a hot chick named Helen, a big wood horse and Achilles gettin' it in the heel. What I got was a star-studded clunkball with no sense of humour and all the deluded sense of self-importance of a bad high school play. Yow.

Its inspiration, *The Iliad*, was written 3,000-odd years ago in an era when the line between history and myth was... well, there wasn't one. Achilles's mother is a goddess, Prexample, and Homer's sequel *The Odyssey* features a hero going up against cyclopes and sirens. But the *Troy*-makers didn't want to do a fantasy movie. Oh no, they wanted to be realistic, to sideline the magical stuff and tell the story as though it were *history*. Okay, cool. It worked for *Lord of the Rings*. Except, wow, do people in this movie ever have terrible reasons for doing things. There's a gross disconnect between the epicness and heroiness the movie seems to think it's about and what it's actually showing.

Let's start with Orlando Bloom as Paris, the naive, whiny-behind-the-ears Trojan prince who kicks off the whole affair by boning and then stealing Helen, the wife of the Spartan general with whom he and his brother Hector

CONTRIBUTING to the emotional misfiring of *Troy* is James Horner's blaringly inappropriate score. He did great work in *Apollo 13* and, yes *Titanic*, but here he's yanking emotional strings that don't exist: "Yay! Paris and Hector's triumphant return!" Except, uh, aren't they bringing news of an upcoming devastating war? The triumph is where exactly? Or, "Yay! The Greek ships are landing!" Which is... good?

We do get a big war, and it's another triumph for the Massive software developed for *Lord of the Rings*, which allows filmmakers to create realistically-moving crowds of tens of thousands of artificial people—something directors are gonna do a lot of in the next few years. So yep, huge armies march on Troy, retreat from Troy, assemble in front of Troy, all

from the intense emotional viewpoint of a guy moving 8,000 guys

around a screen with a mouse.

In *Troy*'s defense, director Wolfgang Petersen does muster some okay spear-on-spear action. He and his fight choreographers don't quite go Hong Kong-style on the *Hero*-level fighting, but Hector and Achilles battle in a sweaty, superrealistic way that packs a punch. Hector also comes up with a couple of good anti-Greek strategies that answered my hope that this movie could somehow find a way to work in a few explosions. Thank God Sean Bean gets a few scenes as Odysseus, and Peter O'Toole makes a welcome appearance late in the film, just when we're fumbling around to find someone we can actually like and care about. But by the time we get to the wooden horse we're thinking, "Jesus, who thought this up?" And since Bana's already out of the picture, we're pretty much marking time, waiting to see some heel mutilation so we can all go home.

Troy tells us that the Trojan War was a battle of legend and immortality, and so it was, but it leaves us with nothing more than shrugging frustration at what a senseless, retarded waste of human life it all was. The message hits close to home in a way, but do you really wanna watch a movie about it? ●

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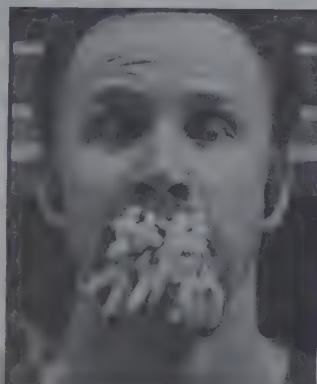


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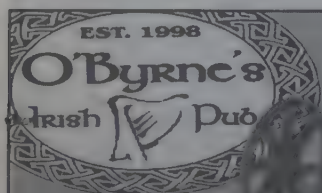
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Oh, to be in England

In This World traces two Afghan refugees' perilous voyage to London

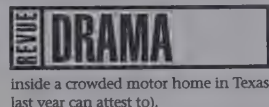
By JOSEF BRAUN

Michael Winterbottom's *In This World* traces the long, perilous and frequently terrifying journey of two young Afghan refugees who depart the Shamshatoo refugee camp in Peshawar, Pakistan in the hopes of smuggling themselves over land and sea all the way to London, England. Set in the wake of international efforts to rid Afghanistan of the Taliban, the film is determined to comment on the plight of refugees like teenage Jamal and his older cousin Enayat while their stories are still news and not his-

tory. Yet to call the message of *In This World* an urgent one would be a little misleading: its relevance isn't time-sensitive because such stories of hardship and mortal danger are common to every part of our world where you can find political upheaval, tyranny, disaster, inequity, genocide or mere poverty and lack (as the many Mexicans who died gasping for breath

Marcel Zyskind's digital camera diligently following the boys into the back of every truck or claustrophobic freight container, through cities and desolate snowy mountain passages.

But while its heart and dedication to its subjects is never in doubt, *In This World* seems less sure in its dedication to being a movie. Winterbottom, who most recently gave us *The Claim* and *24 Hour Party People*, gives Steven Soderbergh stiff competition for sheer diversity among contemporary name directors yet, like Soderbergh, his ambitions can sometimes work against his strongest assets and result in projects that feel only partially realized. Working from a very loose script by Tony Grisoni (the screenwriter of a much more fanciful film about the immigrant experience, *Queen of Hearts*), Winterbottom relays Jamal and Enayat's story with little in the way of storytelling finesse and far



inside a crowded motor home in Texas last year can attest to).

Jamal and Enayat's tale is a deeply disturbing one, their desperation a constant object of exploitation at nearly every turn, the line between aid and trade blurred. The value of Winterbottom's film lies in the persistent way it reveals to us every step of their journey, with



heresy!

Every week in *Heresy!*, *Vue* invites its film writers to champion a film that everyone else dismisses as trash, or to slam a film that everyone else regards as art. This week: **Paul Matwychuk defends *Evil Under the Sun*.**

"Who cares who killed Roger Ackroyd?" asked Edmund Wilson in his notorious 1945 *New Yorker* article in which he dismissed the novels of Agatha Christie, with their old-fashioned country-house settings, thin characters and gimmicky climaxes, as a form of "subliterature."

Who cares, Edmund? I do; between the ages of 12 and 15, I must have read nearly every word Agatha Christie ever published. I didn't just read the Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple novels—my God, I was such a fan that I devoured the Tommy and Tuppence books too. At one point, the thickest book I'd ever completed was *The Mousetrap* and *Other Plays*. I even read *Taken at the Flood*, which turned out not even to be a murder mystery—it's a friggin' romance novel! By this time, I was already in the grip of what would turn out to be a lifelong addiction to puzzles, and I was fascinated by the way Christie always played fair with the reader, putting all the information you needed to solve the mystery in plain view,



even though I was rarely clever enough to fit the pieces together properly.

My Christie mania coincided with a brief vogue for all-star film adaptations of her work. The trend began in 1974 with the most respectable of the bunch, *Murder on the Orient Express*, which was even nominated for six Academy Awards. But over the next few years, with films like *Death on the Nile* and *The Mirror Crack'd*, this mini-genre became increasingly disreputable—an excuse for aging British character actors to travel to exotic locations and pocket a quick paycheck.

But I loved them, and my favourite of the bunch was the one the critics hated the most: 1982's *Evil Under the Sun*, in which Diana Rigg played a sexy, bitchy, universally despised actress who gets murdered at an island resort, forcing Hercule Poirot (Peter Ustinov at his most scenery-chewing) to figure out if the culprit was James Mason, Jane Birkin, Roddy McDowall, Sylvia Miles or any of the other guests being attended to by dithering hotelier Maggie Smith.

Aside from my daily dose of Paul

Lynde on *Hollywood Squares*, I'd never seen characters exhibit wit as theatrical, as viciously bitchy as the people in Agatha Christie movies. I didn't figure out until years later the coded gay sensibility underneath it all—hearing Kim Novak remark, "I could eat a can of Kodak and puke a better movie!" in *The Mirror Crack'd* just struck me as funny, that's all. The fact that Roddy McDowall's gossip columnist in *Evil Under the Sun* was supposed to be gay flew right over my head.

But I did take away something much more important from these films. They may have been murder mysteries, but they were really celebrations of life. The most eccentric characters, the ones in the most outlandish outfits, were always the ones the filmmakers approved of. No, it was the pale little killjoys—Mia Farrow in *Death on the Nile*, Jane Birkin in *Evil Under the Sun*—who always turned out to be hiding a knife up their sleeve. *Evil Under the Sun* completely fooled me when it came time to guess who committed the murder, but at least it gave me the best dating advice of my entire life. ●

less in character development.

IN THIS WORLD adopts the form we used to commonly refer to as docudrama (a term that feels hokey and outdated in the post-"reality" age). In the first part of the film, images of Shamshatoo flash before us with little shape and lots of pathos. A most serious-sounding voice-over gives us some basics on the situation there (circa February 2002) and later returns to give us some fairly generic stats regarding the fates of refugees around the world while the camera's eye swoops across a computerized map. Unlike Winterbottom's *Welcome to Sarajevo*, *In This World* never really strays from its "foreign correspondent" perspective, yet neither does it completely commit to it. Where the style of the film sits is confusing, our suspension of disbelief thwarted by Dario Marianelli's intrusive score and the fact that Winterbottom and his crew could never possibly have bore witness to every scene the camera intercepts if this were a real documentary. Rather than feeling spontaneous,

every episode seems to occur with the camera prepped and waiting—which begs the questions of why the scenes have so little atmosphere or detail.

Winterbottom wants to show us the faces of the people whose suffering is in danger of being regarded abstractly, yet his film is short of the special richness a fiction or fictionalized film can provide. And as a documentary it's equally problematic, lacking in facts and told exclusively in dramatic re-enactments. Of course, for all my reservations, *In This World* is still redeemed in the end by its content. For a film that doesn't always engage the viewer and doesn't seem to get much quite right, there's no denying the power of the few moments in which it manages to impart its point. Moving, but not much of a movie. ●

IN THIS WORLD

Directed by Michael Winterbottom • Written by Tony Grisoni • Starring Jamal Udin Torabi and Enayatullah • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, May 21-24 (9pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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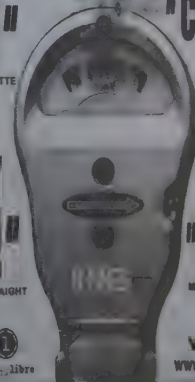
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Crying in his beer

Director Guy Maddin gets weepy over *The Saddest Music in the World*

By JOSEF BRAUN

W if you're sad, and like beer, I'm your lady." In the depths of a Winnipeg winter during the

Depression, these words echo through the airwaves as unemployed families huddle 'round radios in wonder. They're spoken by Lady Port-Huntly (a gutsy but all-class Isabella Rossellini), the beer baroness and strangely seductive double-amputee hosting the contest that gives Guy Maddin's *The Saddest Music in the World* its title. In a dazzling montage of glinting instruments, contestants from every corner

of the globe amass in Manitoba's despair in music, enduring a series of gladiatorial elimination rounds while commentators intrusively narrate to the captive, beer-guzzling audience.

Typical of Maddinlandia, there's raving eccentrics haunted by tragic loss, fraternal rivalry (between Mark McKinney's pathologically cheery wannabe Yankkee and Ross McMillan's gloomy cellist disguised

as a Serbian) and ludicrous coincidences (they unknowingly love the same woman). In adapting a nearly 20-year-old screenplay by novelist Kazuo Ishiguro (*The Remains of the Day*), Maddin and screenwriting collaborator George Toles left little of their source material intact, flooding Ishiguro's blueprint with cross-dressing fortune tellers, talking tapeworms, amnesiac nymphs, Canadiana, floating child-hearts and long, sexy glass legs full of delicious beer. The movie flamboyantly defies concise synopsis with its density and labyrinthine interconnections.

Maddin's filmic language remains rapturously artificial, expressionistic, firmly grounded in the '20s and '30s: shadows so grainy they hover like snow, whites that gleam ghostly like moth-eaten silk, pale faces looming nightmarishly toward the camera, all of it shot through a grimy shower curtain of black and white. Maddin evokes the allure of old movies while dragging their weirdest subtexts to the forefront. Along with Maddin's most cohesive narrative comes broader themes of American cultural colonization and appropriation and the lingering effects of war, faster editing and fluttering montage that heightens drama and punches up the gags. And there are heights of feeling too, surprisingly affecting moments most often centred around multiple interpretations of Jerome Kern's old chestnut "The Song Is You," especially once the film's surprise hero literally brings down the house with it in a fiery climax.

The Saddest Music in the World, his first proper feature since 1997's ill-received *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs*, is an important turning point for Maddin. He spoke with me by phone from his home in Winnipeg on Monday afternoon.

Vue Weekly: There's a moment in the documentary *Guy Maddin: Waiting for Twilight* where you declare your desire to create a film with profound emotional impact. Do you think you've gotten closer to that goal with *The Saddest Music*?

Guy Maddin: Yeah, I think I've gotten a little closer. Yet lots of people can still watch this movie, evidently enjoy it and nonetheless come away saying it's camp. But there was an interesting review by one of my favourite critics, Jonathan Rosenbaum, talking about how much of a traditionalist I am, that I'm not an avant-gardist, that I'm going for real emotion. It was nice to see that someone had intuited my intentions.

VW: I wonder if the critical debate surrounding *Far From Heaven* helped to ease open a door for *The Saddest Music*, making more acceptable the idea that film can be stylized and homage the past and still retain a sincere emotional core.

GM: I even had a debate with myself watching *Far From Heaven*. It's a movie I really like, but it makes you ask if a film can be ironic and still emotional. I think it achieves that. It's obviously possible to be stylized and emotional, since most stories are stylized in some fashion. It amazes me when people think movies have an obligation to be realistic, and it amazes me further when people think that most of the movies they watch are realistic! They want a 3-D movie with Odorama or something like that. But when you think back to the things that move you, they're always stylized: a fairytale or a song, soap operas or whatever. They're all stylized expressions of human experience, just another variation of the campfire tale.

VW: The emotional life of your films is often the discounted element, and this idea of a protagonist

SEE NEXT PAGE

Toles notes

He's the Keith to his Mick, the cheese to his macaroni, the liver to his lower intestine: Screenwriter **George Toles** has been involved in most of Guy Maddin's major works. He's also a professor at the University of Manitoba and author of *A House Made of Light: Essays on the Art of Film*. He spoke with me by phone from his office on Monday morning for a very enjoyable hour-plus. Here's a sampling.

Vue Weekly: *The Saddest Music in the World* feels like a fresh evolutionary step in your ongoing collaboration.

George Toles: Well, it'd been awhile since *Twilight of the Ice Nymphs* and that film didn't find the audience we'd hoped, so I had time to ponder what might be done to remedy this if there happened to be a next time. There seemed to be three crucially important recognitions: fantasy more than any other kind of genre needs grounding; there can be no Oz without Kansas. Secondly, we fell prey to that familiar Canadian syndrome of automatic protagonist passivity. Mark McKinney's character was a deliberate attempt to ensure we had a proactive protagonist who never apologizes, looks back or questions himself. He dismisses sadness, but of course it'll catch up with him, so how long he can hold off? The third thing was just a decision to pay more rigorous attention to pace.

The more experimental a movie is, the less chance you have of solving the problem of pace.

VW: You're at once creating a protagonist who's less deliberate and in some ways working through a writing process that's more, which is tricky. Intuition plays such a delicate balance. I'm thinking about something you wrote about an artist having "the wrong kind of knowing,"

to put my critical nervousness asleep, to write in a state of healthy unknowing, free enough not to monitor excessively. It requires the actor's trick of becoming someone else for awhile—in my case, Guy Maddin, who loves writing. So I seem to be making choices not for myself but for someone else, so that self-censorship won't kill imaginative play.

VW: Yet the unconscious elements of these

things important to him, his experiences—

VW: —and his perspective on history.

GT: That's true. He's never bought the idea that old movies are simply about artificial conventions of diversion. He takes the methods of early cinema seriously as a means of expression. He trusts the ways those filmmakers used oblique methods to get at vital things. It's the reverse of people who take delight in recreating the '50s kitchen with the cliché homemaker wife to remind us, once again, how stupid people were back then. Guy's aware of how early filmmakers were powerfully in touch with the dreamlike nature of the medium. He reveres the enduring ghostliness of those images.

VW: Film's always been an abstract medium, it's just that the palatable method of abstraction changes with the times. One day it's expressionism, another it's Technicolor, another it's CGI.

GT: I sense that young people today, though the box office hasn't revealed it yet, are becoming tired of the high-tech trends of late. Yet I worry that CGI may have dulled their patience for what I like to think of as enchanting, home-made effects. I think the only way that Guy could have his cake and eat it was to, like *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* for example, insist on a kind of in-camera, primitive magic that has nothing to do with cutting-edge refinements. So you're told from the first image, don't worry about the primitiveness. It's there on purpose. It's there as your medium of vision. And hopefully it can transport us. —JOSEF BRAUN



excessive premeditation.

GT: For the longest time, premeditation paralyzed me completely as someone considering creative writing as a possibility. And screenwriting, which I think of as a mongrel artform, required me

films are so easily lost in discussions over the look and sound of them.

GT: Well, the best defence against Guy's work being reduced to a kind of self-conscious archive-trolling is that he uses the style to express



Significant ogres

Shrek 2 proudly upholds the fairytale-spoofing tradition of its predecessor

BY MALCOLM AZANIA
(MINISTER FAUST)

The Saddest Music in the World
Continued from previous page

[McKinney] who suppresses his sadness in favour of showmanship seems perhaps like a comment on that.

GM: George Toles and I came up with this reductive thesis that Europeans tend to embrace their sadness straight up. Possibly because Europe's been the arena of world wars and countless genocides and so on, they tend to be more direct. America's always buried its sadness beneath showy distraction, complete misdirection, entertaining lies. "Happy Days Are Here Again" was a big hit during the Depression. "We're in the Money." And I suppose when you're a "have" country and there's all these "have-not" countries struggling at your feet, you have to repress things that might be bugging your conscience.

VW: I recently read about this incident with the performing monkey beating you with a fake pistol on your third birthday when you tried to play his little piano [The Believer, August 2003]. I wonder if that isn't a curious omen of your own personal repressive tendencies.

GM: [pausing to recall] Yeah, it was the only time I ever had a birthday party. But I was the only kid there. I guess my parents really wanted to show off this rented monkey. I think I learned then not to expect too much. And be very cautious. It was only when I started making movies that I've learned to be less cowardly.

VW: Do you begin writing from

Rippling with superhuman strength, possessed of boundless anger and alienated from humanity because of his infragreen skin, he's hunted by a world which cannot accept him, which has given him a woman he's sworn to protect... even from himself. The Incredible Shrek.

Well, no, Shrek hasn't been redone by Ang Lee and Mr. Green hasn't been emotionally crippled

personal experiences or do they creep into the work as you go?

GM: Both, I think. I'm always using myself as litmus paper, dipping myself into narratives to see what colour I turn. Sometimes it's convenient to think of myself in simple terms, like "coward," because I kinda am one. So I have a coward and I ask if his actions are consistent with my behaviour. I know Ingmar Bergman did something similar, making himself his female characters. When I made my overtly autobiographical work *Cowards Bend the Knee*, I discovered inadvertently that I was doing that too. There's a character called Guy Maddin, but it's this girl that he goes out with has actually possesses more of my biographical details.

VW: *The Saddest Music* marks a reunion of sorts between you and George Toles. He's been a collaborator on so much of your work that I wonder if there's some essence to those projects that rises solely from the fusion of your individual visions.

GM: When I met George he was 32 and I was 24, he was a film professor and I was a student, and I sort of switched hemispheres around that time. I was originally a math and economics major and I liked firm answers. I wasn't happy with my education. But I met this guy and we got along really well and made each other laugh, and I went over to the mysterious and the subjective and he taught me how to read, gave me a road map. He's been my guru or whatever. Even though he didn't receive credit in my first films, I was always running things by him. He's been so impor-

tant in everything I do and continues to be. Even if he's dead he'd still be a collaborator, because I know how he thinks. I find myself having imaginary conversations with him when I'm daydreaming about my next film. We helped each other discover our creativity. And since the films we've made seem to have their own specialized little place in the film world, maybe that's also prevented other suitors from coming to call.

VW: You're stuck together.

GM: Yeah, we don't seem to be perceived as lucrative commodities. [Laughs.] No one has tried wooing one away from the other with big bags of money.

VW: In the future, do you see your filmic style continuing in the montage-heavy approach of *The Saddest Music* and *Heart of the World*?

GM: I'd like to make brisker narratives. They seem to be getting brisker each time. I'd just like to be a better storyteller. That's always been tough for me. I don't know where I'm going to go next. But I am getting used to having more people see the movies, to having people like Isabella and Ishiguro helping our visibility without me feeling like I've had to compromise. In the end I want to be able to say what Luis Buñuel said: that he never once included or excluded a single shot against his will. Every moment has to count. ●

THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WORLD

Directed by Guy Maddin • Written by Guy Maddin and George Toles • Starring Isabella Rossellini and Mark McKinney • Opens Fri, May 21

far CG animation has come, even since *Final Fantasy*. You'll get plenty of cute send-ups of Joan Rivers, *Flashdance*, *Ghostbusters* and *The Lord of the Rings*, some fun new musical production numbers (although the first big number is very difficult to make out) and some bland pop tunes in the score.

THE JOKES, ALAS, aren't all that funny (nor were they in *Shrek 1*), and the hilarious Mike Myers is as

REVUE ANIMATED

restrained here as he was in the original. The character relationships haven't deepened, either. But this new adventure is far more thrilling, and an animal buccaneer voiced by Antonio Banderas brings great new energy and provides the film with its most hilarious gag.

I hope that the excellent animators behind *Shrek 2* are able one day to create a film as rich in story and characterization as it is in visual beauty.

While CGI and other effects have given us exquisite live-action visual fare such as *LOTR*, *Attack of the Clones* and *X2*, there's something to be said for what animated characters can do with their Play-Doh faces and exaggerated gestures, even in a serious story for adults. The brilliant comic *Ghost World* made for a superb live action movie, and I'd love to see something which began as a drawn story retain its visual personality as a movie.

Shrek 2 isn't that, and it doesn't want to be. It isn't going to change your life; it isn't going to change the way we think about green monsters. But it will make you smile and chuckle, and, while it's not as good as conversation and play, it's a pretty good way to spend 90 minutes with your kids. ●

SHREK 2

Directed by Andrew Adamson, Kelly Asbury and Conrad Vernon • Written by J. David Stern, Joe Stillman and David N. Weiss • Featuring the voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, John Cleese and Julie Andrews • Now playing

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NEW THIS WEEK

In This World (M) Jamal Udin Torabi and Enayatullah Jaudan star in *24 Hour Party People* director Michael Winterbottom's docudrama about two teenage African refugees who follow a human "pipeline" to freedom through Iran, Turkey, Italy and France on their way to London. In Farsi and Pashtu with English subtitles. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, May 21-24 (9pm)*

Proje(c)t Y (M) A collection of 13 short films by young, university-trained Quebec filmmakers. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, May 20 (7pm)*

The Reckoning (P) Paul Bettany, Willem Dafoe and Brian Cox star in *Gangster No. 7* director Paul McGuigan's medieval whodunit about a disgraced priest who finds himself at the centre of the investigation into a local murder case after hooking up with a troupe of travelling actors. Based on Barry Unsworth's novel *Mystery Play*.

Roger Toupin: Épicier Variété (M) Director Benoit Pilon's modest documentary about the proprietor of a small, unprofitable grocery store who must sell his business when his elderly mother needs to be placed in a nursing home. In French with English subtitles. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, May 21-24 (7pm)*

The Saddest Music in the World (CO) Isabella Rossellini, Mark McKinney and Maria de Medeiros star in *Careful* director Guy Maddin's wildly eccentric musical melodrama about a legless Winnipeg beer baroness who sponsors a contest to determine which nation produces the most melancholy music on the planet.

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Asa Nu Brian Watna Da (CO) Harbhajan Mann, Kurandeep Kimmi and Gurpreet Chuggi star in director Manmohan Singh's Bollywood musical about two young lovers, one raised in India, the other in Canada, and their struggle to overcome their cultural differences.

Breakin' All the Rules (CO) Jamie Foxx, Gabrielle Union, Morris Chestnut and Jennifer Esposito star in *Commandments*

writer/director Daniel Taplitz's relationship comedy about a man who reinvents himself as a bestselling breakup expert after getting dumped by his girlfriend.

The Corporation (GA) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.

The Delicate Art of Parking (P) Dov Tiefenbach and Fred Ewanuick star in director Trent Carlson's low-budget mockumentary about a scowling filmmaker who gets drawn into the bizarre subculture of parking enforcement while researching his latest documentary.

Envy (CO) Jack Black, Ben Stiller, Rachel Weisz and Amy Poehler star in *Wag the Dog* director Barry Levinson's critically savaged comedy about a pair of lifelong buddies whose friendship undergoes severe strain when one of them becomes incredibly wealthy as the inventor of a device that vapourizes dog feces.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman

Good Bye, Lenin! (CO) Daniel Bruhl, Kathrin Sass and Maria Simon star in director Wolfgang Becker's satirical comedy about a young German man whose staunchly Communist mother awakens from a lengthy coma and, fearing that the shock of hearing the truth will kill her, goes to ridiculous lengths to keep her from finding out that the Iron Curtain has fallen. In German with English subtitles.

Home on the Range (CO, FP) The voices of Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Judi Dench, Steve Buscemi and Jennifer Tilly are featured in this animated Disney cartoon about a group of animals who band together to raise enough money to pay off the mortgage on the farm where they all live.

Kill Bill, Vol. 2 (CO, FP) Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Michael Madsen and Daryl Hannah star in the conclusion of writer/director

Quentin Tarantino's genre-hopping exploitation epic, in which a former assassin relentlessly tracks down the man who employed her, impregnated her, shot her and left her for dead.

Laws of Attraction (CO) Pierce Brosnan, Julianne Moore, Frances Fisher and Parker Posey star in *Sliding Doors* director Peter Howitt's romantic comedy about a husband-and-wife pair of divorce attorneys struggling to keep their own marriage together while terminating those of their clients.

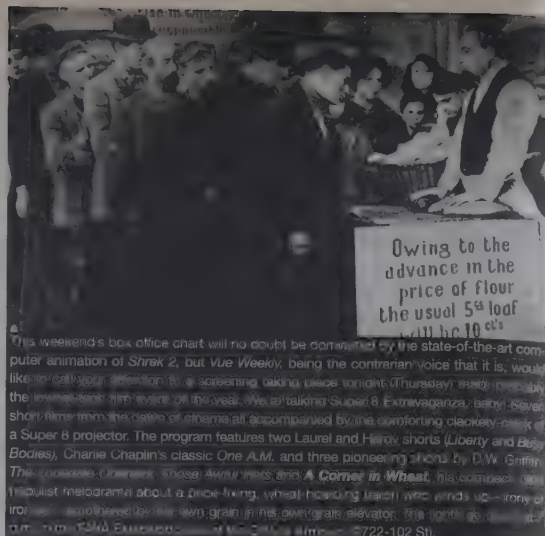
Main Hoon Na (FP) Shahrukh Khan, Zayed Khan, Amrita Rao and Naseeruddin Shah star in director Farah Khan's Bollywood musical about a major who must pose as a university student in order to protect the life of an officer's daughter and to fulfill the dying wish of his martyred father. In Hindi.

Man on Fire (CO, FP) Denzel Washington, Dakota Fanning and Christopher Walken star in *Top Gun* director Tony Scott's glossy revenge flick about a former U.S. Marine who takes a job as a bodyguard for the daughter of a wealthy family in Mexico City that has been targeted by a gang of kidnappers.

Mean Girls (CO, FP) Lindsay Lohan, Lacey Chabert, Rachel McAdams and Tina Fey (who also wrote the script) star in *Freaky Friday* director Mark S. Waters's anthropological teen comedy about a high school transfer student who finds herself at war with a ruthless clique of snobby popular girls.

New York Minute (CO, FP) Mary-Kate Olsen, Ashley Olsen and Eugene Levy star in *What a Girl Wants* director Dennie Gordon's tween comedy about two twin sisters—one a scholarly "good girl," the other a rebellious "punk rocker"—who have a full day of misadventures when they sneak off together to New York City.

Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (CO, FP) Matthew Lillard, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Linda Cardellini and Freddie Prinze Jr. star in director Raja Gosnell's sequel to his 2002 hit, in which the Mystery, Inc. detective agency battles an evil scientist who has developed a machine that recre-



ates the greatest foes from their past cases.

Shrek 2 (CO, FP) The voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Antonio Banderas, Julie Andrews and John Cleese are featured in this sequel to the 2001 animated hit, in which grouchy ogre Shrek travels to the homeland of his new wife Fiona, where he gets a chilly reception from her parents and her former beau, Prince Charming.

Starsky and Hutch (FP) Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Snoop Dogg star in *Old School* director Todd Phillips's irreverent film version of the 1970s TV cop show about a pair of mismatched policemen who fight crime with the aid of their souped-up Ford Torino and their omniscient street informant Huggy Bear.

13 Going on 30 (CO, FP) Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo, Kathy Baker and Judy Greer star in *Tadpole* director Gary Winick's comic fantasy about a gawky 13-year-old girl who wakes up one morning as her gorgeous, successful 30-year-old self as a result of a magical wish.

Touching the Void (GA) Joe Simpson, Simon Yates, Nicholas Aaron and Brendan Mackey star in *One Day in September* director

Kevin Macdonald's documentary about Yates's astonishing, harrowing struggle to survive a disastrous mountaineering expedition in the Peruvian Andes. Based on the book by Joe Simpson.

Troy (CO, FP) Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Orlando Bloom, Brian Cox and Peter O'Toole star in *Doom* director Wolfgang Petersen's CGI-fueled epic retelling of the saga of the Trojan War, from Paris's abduction of Helen of Troy to the Greeks' bloody, decade-long siege of the Troy stronghold.

Van Helsing (CO, FP) Hugh Jackson, Kate Beckinsale and Richard Roxburgh star in *The Mummy* director Stephen Sommers's CGI-filled action/horror blockbuster, in which celebrated 19th-century monster hunter Abraham Van Helsing finds himself battling Count Dracula, the Wolf Man and Frankenstein's monster in a remote Eastern European village.

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Ishmael and female

Portraitist Carolyn Campbell puts modern women's faces on Renaissance bodies

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

Right in the heart of the University of Alberta, the large windows of the FAB Gallery look out onto busy bus terminals. Usually, students pay little attention to the paintings displayed within them as they dash

by on their way to class, but this week the work in the windows is hard to ignore. The giant portraits of women dressed in Renaissance clothing by Carolyn Campbell (part of a show entitled *To Call Me Ishmael*)

look down at the bustling crowd with such quiet intensity, such everlasting feminine strength, that they stop many students dead in their tracks. They made me pause too—"Who are these timeless women?" I wondered, and decided to meet the artist and get to the bottom of the matter.

Vue Weekly: I am so intrigued by the way your portraits seem to take contemporary women and place them in some other time, some other culture, some other place. Am I wrong?

Carolyn Campbell: You are absolutely right. The women who are modeling in these paintings are artists. They are artists that I know and respect. I admire their work. I also thought that they had faces that would really fit with the Renaissance bodies that I was putting on them. I wanted to make pictures that show a contemporary person shouldering the past. They are wearing on their shoulders this weight of history.

VW: Could you tell me more about the people that you drew? What was it about them that was so special, that inspired you?

CC: Partly it came down to the artwork that they were doing. I felt that as women and artists they have a legacy. It's a part of the responsibility of women. In a lot of these pieces, [the faces] are very responsible. It's who I am too. It comes back to your whole life. These women have a solid sense of responsibility to their art.

VW: Do you think that women have a greater sense of responsibility?

CC: Oh, no—I don't mean that at all. Not at all. I am just saying that these women have a real solid sense of responsibility to their art and working through their art.

VW: And yet as a mom, I do find that my life is one of constant balancing of equal responsibilities. It's not that my husband doesn't work—he

certainly does. But he is mainly responsible for his job, whereas I am equally responsible for my job and for my children, and if somebody comes over to our house, they're not going to say that he is a messy housekeeper.

CC: [Laughs.] I know, it's so true. And who is picking up the kids? Who's leaving at three o'clock today to pick them up? It's those kinds of things. So in my life, ever since I was about three years old, I was troubled by an overwrought sense of responsibility. It's been a part of who I am.... But there was something about the work that [the women artists in the portraits] were doing. I love all three of them. I love their work. I find it quiet and peaceful, quite sophisticated.... At the same time they have very beautiful, very particular faces.

PREVIEW VISUAL ARTS

VW: They are very serious faces.

CC: They are intelligent faces. There is so much going on in their eyes. That's what I love. These faces reflect a complexity and substantiality to their lives. I thought that they could hold up a Holbein or Manet body.

VW: That's what struck me when I first saw them: contemporary life is filled with images with stuff, with visual and auditory noise. And when I look at your work, there is this incredible Renaissance sense of qui-

etude. The fact that you have made the figures stand against such a blank background makes the faces very real. It's a different way of relating to people. It's not like passing somebody by on the street. You force us to confront the person. And the people you help us to see fully are women who seemed so antithetical to the way we are seen in mass media. I couldn't figure out what was so different about these women, and I think that you've finally put a word on it for me. It's that overwhelming sense of responsibility; there is almost a religious quality to it.

CC: I see timelessness in people... and all of these people, if one were to know the women who modeled, they hold back a little bit when they are in a public situation. They have a very quiet power about them. But they all have it. They all have it. And it shows in their faces. ●

TO CALL ME ISHMAEL

By Carolyn Campbell • FAB Gallery • To May 29



All the road's a stage in Workshop West's *Secret Spaces: The Bus Project*

By KAREN HOWELL

This is probably the most unique theatre experience in this city in years, and it's one people will be talking about in their offices," says Cathleen Rootsart, one of the five local playwrights contributing to *Secret Spaces: The Bus Project*, the adventurous new production by Workshop West.

Rather than sitting in a theatre and watching a play unfold onstage, the audience for *Secret Spaces* boards a city bus, and gets driven by an ETS operator to five different "mystery" venues located all over Edmonton. Workshop West artistic director Ron Jenkins came up with the idea to celebrate his company's anniversary and to honour the city's centennial. "I wanted to do something as unique as possible for our 25th anniversary," he says, "and try to step outside the bounds of what we normally do, and celebrate as many writers as possible. I wanted a project that was wild and wacky in a way." He asked the playwrights (Rootsaert, Kenneth Brown, Marty Chan, Beth Graham and Miekko Ouchi) to each write a short play about a secret space, or tell a secret story that was important to them.

Rootsaert's entry was inspired by a tiny newspaper item she discovered in a 1931 edition of the *Edmonton Bulletin*. The article described how a four-year-old Polish girl was put on a train by her mother with nothing but a note pinned to her coat; the note contained the girl's name and instructions that she was supposed to arrive in Liverpool and sail overseas. Amazingly, the little girl successfully completed the journey. "I started to think about the

other places in the world I could have been born," Rootsart says, "and what good fortune, how humbling it is to have been born into a community like this, the comfort of Canada. For that to happen, there are all kinds of amazing stories of people who were brave enough to come here in the first place."

Rootsaert won't reveal the identity of her venue, but she has a hard time concealing her enthusiasm for it. "The sense of atmosphere is some-

PREVIEW THEATRE

thing you could only recreate with a bazillion dollars," she says. "You feel like you're eavesdropping on a moment in a family's life, a very different experience from a theatre."

JENKINS SAYS while many of the stories are very specific to Edmonton, there's also a universality to them. "Things become filmic in a way," he says, "because you're in the actual space where the story would have happened." Because the venues are not theatres but in many cases actual places of business, it was difficult or impossible to plug in theatre lights or amplification equipment and the set designers had to be as creative as possible,

using natural light and acoustical elements. "But they give us such an authenticity," Jenkins says, "and that's the exciting bit." Meanwhile, the actors (all of whom appear in multiple playlets) face the logistical challenge of simply driving through the late-night Edmonton traffic and arriving at each location before the audience does.

That bus, by the way, departs from the northeast corner of the old bus barns, now the Arts Barns. Along the way, the audience will be treated to tidbits of historical lore by a tour guide/emcee played by Bridget Ryan. "It is a rollercoaster ride in a way," Jenkins says. "You've got all these pieces that are different and the same at the same time, and we play with your perceptions. And there's stuff that takes place off the bus as well, another show that goes on just within the city on a nightly basis. It's a ton of fun to get on the bus and see the city in a completely different way." ●

SECRET SPACES: THE BUS PROJECT

Directed by Ron Jenkins • Written by Kenneth Brown, Marty Chan, Beth Graham, Miekko Ouchi and Cathleen Rootsart • Starring Robert Corness, Cathy Derkach, Chris Fassbender, Dave Horak and Bridget Ryan • Departs from the Arts Barns (northeast corner) • May 20-June 5 • 477-5955



theatre notes

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

Jungle fever

Pithl • Varscona Theatre • May 20-June 5 • preVUE I have an embarrassing confession to make: I used to think that Stewart Lemoine was, like, totally overrated. You see, I'm kind of a late-comer to regular theatregoing, and the first two Teatro la Quindicina productions I ever saw were *Rope* and *Hedda Gabler*, plays I'm fairly sure Lemoine had minimal involvement with at the script level. My first Lemoine-scripted show was *Ludicrous Pie*, a collection of short plays that was fun but still left me wondering, "Why is everyone so crazy about Stewart Lemoine?"

My question was answered when I saw *Pithl* at the 1997 Fringe Festival. It probably isn't exactly kosher for a theatre critic to drop his guard this way in a preview, but that performance remains one of my most treasured theatrical memories of all time. Jeff Haslam played Jack Vail, a roving adventurer who takes it upon himself to help New England widow Virginia Trimble (Davina Stewart) bring closure to her grief by taking her on an action-packed, albeit imaginary trip up the Amazon River, where her husband disappeared 10 years ago on a silver-mining expedition. It wasn't just the play's fast pace and abundant humour that appealed to me; it was its unexpectedly moving celebration of the power of imaginary things to cause dramatic changes in the real world. *Pithl* truly makes you believe that you can travel up the Amazon without ever leaving your living room.

My strongest memory of that performance is a lot less lofty, though: it's the sight of Leona Brausen (playing Virginia's faithful maid Nancy) frantically searching for the gap in the curtains so that she could make her final exit. "Oh, I am notorious for not being able to get offstage," says Brausen in a tone of voice that makes me suspect I didn't exactly witness an isolated incident. "Even when they pinned back the curtains yesterday in rehearsal, I had trouble finding my way offstage."

Pithl is Brausen's second Lemoine revival of the season—a couple of months ago, she climbed back into her pinafore to play one of the title character's slow-witted charges in *The Vile Governess and Other Psychodramas*. "It was bizarre how strongly everything came back to my Swiss cheese brain with *The Vile Governess*," Brausen says. ("Swiss cheese brain"? Could Brausen be a secret *Quantum Leap* fan?) "I've been trying to figure that out because with this play, it's not happening so much. It's certainly not because I like it any less. What does happen is that, because we're doing it in the same theatre, you find yourself saying a line on one side of the stage and thinking,

'Wait a minute—I need to be on the other side.' And the feeling is so strong that we wind up having to change it back—it's just too creepy otherwise."

This isn't the first time Haslam, Stewart and Brausen have restaged *Pithl*—in 1999, they restaged it at the Varscona Theatre and at Calgary's High Performance Rodeo—but it's probably the version with the most ambitious touring prospects. They're not going anywhere near the Amazon, but once the Edmonton run is over, the company is taking the show to the Winnipeg and New York Fringes. "Well, you know," laughs Brausen. "If they really like us in Winnipeg, we'll feel ready to take New York."

Gao and forever

Dialogue and Rebuttal • Timms Centre for the Arts • To May 22 • reVUE It will probably help your enjoyment of *Dialogue and Rebuttal* to know going into it that it doesn't really have a plot. The first half of the play is basically just an extended postcoital conversation between a man (Jonathan Christenson, making a rare non-Catalyst Theatre stage appearance) and an attractive younger woman (Beth Graham) who cuddle, argue and play sadistic games with each other. The second half begins after they're dead and watches as they try to adjust to life as bodiless spirits. But these incidents don't really build on each other—one moment, the man is threatening the woman with a knife, the next she's chasing him around the bedroom, smacking his bare bottom with a pillow. It feels more like the author, Nobel Prize-winner Gao Xingjian, is working out a series of intellectual theorems about sexual relations than developing a storyline with a dramatic arc.

And you should probably also be aware that the play doesn't really contain conventional "characters," either—we get an impression of the man as a somewhat amoral sexual predator and we learn a little about the woman's past (principally through a bizarre "when it's inevitable..." monologue in which she describes being quasi-raped during a hiking trip through India), but they register—by design—more as male and female abstractions than as figures with inner lives and three-dimensional backstories.

As a play with no conventional plot and no conventional characters, *Dialogue and Rebuttal* presents some pretty severe impediments to an audience looking for nothing more than a couple of entertaining hours in the theatre. What it does have going for it, though, is Patrick Du Wors's eye-catching set—a raised stage surrounded on three sides by enormous lattices of transparent plastic strips upon which director Goesta Struve-Dencher projects moody, milky images of water and the outlines of dancing bodies. (The quivering plastic strips make them look like lo-res 1930s television transmissions.) And there's also the unusually forceful stage presence of dancer Sonja Myllymaki, playing a Zen monk whose solemn, solitary exercises comment obliquely on the conversations taking place elsewhere on the stage between the man and the woman.

SEE NEXT PAGE

WORLD PREMIERE of

3...2...1

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Continued from previous page

The biggest stumbling block for me with this show, though, is the lack of colourful, poetic language. I'm not sure if that's the fault of Gao or the translator, but without plot or characters, I yearned for some kind of extra stimulation that would sustain me through the script's occasional arid patches. And yet, even though it's an unnecessarily opaque play that could easily be shortened by about half an hour, it does boast several moments of remarkable beauty, especially the final tableau, which may be the most stunning final image I've seen in a play since the ice-skating scene that ended Ronnie Burckett's *Providence*.

I'm not going to pretend that *Dialogue and Rebuttal* isn't an intellectual challenge, but it's also a play that strives to create a genuinely emotional response in the viewer, and it refuses to use any sentimental shortcuts to get there.

All that Az

Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow's excellent play 3... 2... 1 concludes its run at Azimuth Theatre (11315-106 St) on May 23, and you should make a point of catching it before then. But even if you show up a day or two late, you'll still be entertained, since Azimuth is hosting two theatre events immediately afterward.

On Monday, May 24, Ribbit Productions is hosting a fundraiser for its seven-city summer tour of their show *Pilk's Madhouse*, a raucous collection

of off-the-wall, polymorphous perverse sketches written by Toronto madman Henry Pilk, the alter ego of British comic Ken Campbell. Besides earning a Sterling nomination in 2003 for Outstanding Production by a Collective, it was one of my favourite shows of last season and is more than deserving of your support. The pay-what-you-can show gets underway at 8 p.m.

And then, from May 25-29, the Az plays host to *It's Cory Country*, a new comedy by actor/playwright Sam Varteniuk and Trent Wilkie. "It's the story of a kid who doesn't know what he wants to do with his life," Wilkie says. "Everyone's trying to get him to do something, and he just knows he doesn't want to do what they want him to do. You could call it a coming-of-age story, but it's more about indecisiveness—it's about someone who'd rather screw around with their life than make a decision. All he wants to do is his obscure performance art. A white room with a bucket of cow vulvas, some hamburger buns and some ketchup—that's his message to the world."

It sounds like classic Fringe material, but for Varteniuk and Wilkie, it's a point of pride to do the show in May instead of August. "We wanted to do something that sort of stood out from the Fringe," Wilkie says. "Right now, everyone is going, 'Are you doing a Fringe show? Are you doing a Fringe show?' And I wanted to say, 'No, but I'm doing this.' It's a more honest test, it seems, of whether people will come and see it. I'd rather see an honest turnout of people who are really interested than just a runoff from the Fringe." ●

ARTS WEEKLY

For your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to list@vfw.bc.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

A LITTLE BIT O' DIS AND A LITTLE BIT O' DAT Kasea Theatre (420-175/944-9115) • Presented by Kompany, choreography by DORIS ROLES, Sharon Richardson and Ron Schuster • May 20-23, 27-29 (8pm), May 30 (2pm) • \$18 (adults/\$12 student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square • May 22-July 7

PICTURES FROM THE PAST: EDMONTON 1904 2004 Myer Horowitz Theatre (420-8088) • Presented by Dance Alberta • May 30 (2pm) • \$15 • Tickets available at Dance Alberta

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611/488-5900) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all holidays) • **NEW LOWER LEVEL GALLERY: HAND WORK SERIES** • TO THE BONE, IN THE BLOOD, FROM THE HEART: Series of Calgary tapestry artists Jane Kidd, until July 7 • **HANE LEGS, GREAT CHIEFS, HOT SEAT**: Works by NAIT'S Aboriginal Woodworking and Furniture Design graduating class • May 22-July 7

ART BAIT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • Paintings by Andrew Rzesewski

ARTISHTAP STUDIO GALLERY 3rd floor, Knoll Building, 10217-106 St (423-2966) • Open Tue 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Bryon, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pederson, Tim Rechner, and others

BLACK GOLD GALLERY AND FRAME 4724-50 Ave, Leduc (984-6393) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm • Featuring mixed media artworks by Arthur Evey (1924-2003) as well as prints of various artists artworks • Through May

CHANDLER ART GALLERY 5002-50 St (436-5843/477-3463) • **CHICRIG: EXHIBITION** • May 22-June 5

CHRISTEL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9621 Whyte Ave (439-8210) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm, Sat, by appointment • **SUMMER SALON II**: Oil paintings by Christel Bergstrom • Until September 30

CITY ARTS CENTRE 10943-84 Ave (496-6955) • Artworks by students and instructors • May 28-30 • Opening reception: May 28 (12-5pm)

DOUGLAS UDDEN GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • **BLOOD WITH DARK ROOTS**: Paintings by Natalia Husar • Until May 22

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm, Thu 10:30am-8pm, Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **REN MACLIN**: until June 6 • **REID NOTES**: Artworks by the O'Flanagan brothers, until June 6 • **A VISIT WITH ARTISTS**: Tom O'Flanagan, Thu, May 20; exhibition tour with Tom O'Flanagan (6pm); slide lecture in theatre (7pm) • **FIBRE ART**: Quilts, clothing and textile designs; lower level, until June 1 • **IMAGES OF EDMONTON**: until Sept. 19 • **Kitchen Gallery: TIDAL TRACE**: A multimedia installation by Lyndal Osborne and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Arts District Open House**: Film screenings, workshops, scavenger hunt • May 30 • **Children's Gallery: SPREADSHOOT**: until Jan. 2005 • \$8 (adults/\$6 student/senior), \$4 (children 6-12 free) (member/children 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open: Wed-Fri 10am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-4pm, closed long weekends • **NEW WORKS**: Paintings by Kate More • Until May 29

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd fl, 8305-112 St • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-6pm • **ENDLESS DISCOVERY**: Paintings by Ana Cristina Fregues • Until May 26

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, Fire Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **TO CALL ME ISHMAEL**: Artworks by Carolyn Campbell; May 18-29; opening reception Thu, May 20 (7-10pm) • **DESIGNING A BETTER JOB**: Design works by Adrien • Until May 29 • Opening reception: May 20 (7-10pm)

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-6pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings, inuks by G. Aruk, Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by M. Tallo • Through May

FRIDGE GALLERY 88m 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm • **FAMILAR RINGS**: Paintings by Carol Wyle • Until May 31 • **SPARKING VOLUMES**: Paintings by Linda Carrazo; through June

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **AM I GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, SEX, FOOD?** Artworks by Shelley Rothenberger; until June 12 • **FRUIT**: Works by Jennifer Allen; until June 12 • **FRUIT**: Works by Jennifer Allen; until June 12

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • **SPRING DEBUT**: Until June 1

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by Jim Akerman, Jim Braeger, Glenda Beaver, Jack Ellis, Linda Nelson, George Toszczak, George Werber, Pewter by Raymond Cox, bronzes by Gilda McDougall-Cohoe • Through May

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Andrew Reimann, Alk Roberge, prints by Toit, Edmonton Sky Line prints by Loren Chabot, Photographs of Edmonton River Valley Area by John Johnson • Through May

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St (432-5353) • **5TH ANNUAL VISUALFEZ**: A festival of performance art and time-based art featuring the curatorial focus of time • May 20-29 • Opening reception: Thu, May 20 (8pm) \$5

MCMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • **ALLEGRIA**: Paintings and sculptures by Annette Ayre, Carol Hill, Pat Di Marcello, Ingrid Martel, Mary Topping, Lynne Wolloughby Scott and Mary Whig • Until June 20

MCPAG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • **SIX TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI**: Paintings and drawings by Myles MacDonald • Until May 26

MUSE HERITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm • **SCIENCE ON THE MOVE**: Until June 1

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albans (460-2160) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm; Thu 10am-8pm • **HIGH ENERGY**: Art work by St. Albans High Schools • Until May 29

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12685-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open: Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • **THROUGH THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE**: Embroidery traditions and high craftsmanship of women from Gujarat, India; until June 6 • **IN THE SHADOW OF VOLCANOS**: Indonesian artworks; until June 6 • **WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN? HEALING THE LEGACY OF THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS**: until Aug. 2 • **BIG THINGS**: 3 featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; until Mar. 29 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY**: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. **Reel**: Permanent exhibit • **SPURLIGHT GALLERY: EVERY MOTHER'S FEAR**: ALBERTA'S POLICE EXPERIENCE; until Sept. 12 • **The Natural History Gallery**: **BUG ROOM**: Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD**: Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH**: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY**: Permanent exhibit • **Wild Alberta** every weekend. Presentations start at 1 pm and 2 pm • Admission is half price Sat and Sun (9-11am)

RED STRAP ART MARKET 10305-97 St (497-2211) • Open: Tue-Sun 11am-5pm • Artworks by various artists and artists

ROVLES AND COMPANY GALLERY 10130-103 St (426-4035) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 12-5pm • Glass blown sculptures by Mark Gibeau, Arta Vargat, Marcia de Vique and Jennifer Jacquet. Also metal art works by Rogelio Menez and Lynn Gratz • **Hotel** • **Donald**: Acrylic paintings by Audrey Plannmuller • **Oxford Tower**: Oil paintings by Audrey Plannmuller • **Scotia Place**: Steve Mills • Until June 30

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **NEW WORKS**: Landscape paintings and still life pastels by Jacqueline Steinberg • Until May 25

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **HOW TO BECOME A MIRROR**: SNAP membership show; until May 22 • **TERRESTRIAL FORCES**: Printmaking artworks by Karen Kunc; May 27-July 3; opening reception: Thu, May 27 (7-9pm); Artist lecture and slide presentation: Sat, May 29 (1-3pm); free

SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM, 8882-170 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kubo and Jacqueline Steinberg

STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY Centre for Reading and the Arts • **MILLENNIUM IN A BOX**: Handmade books, a conceptual interpretation of where the millennium is leading by Canadian artists • Until June 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • **FACES AND PLACES**: Artworks by Alandra Lendlighit, Bruce Allen, Doug Fraser, Susanna Loukas, Mary Lee Small, Helen Smith, Bruce Thompson, Pat Wagnere • Until June 26

STUDIO 321 Rice Howard Way, 10168-100A St (424-6746) • Open: Sat-Sun 1-4pm • **THE FATHER-SON EXHIBIT**: Landscapes, florals, portraits by Marc Muman and sculptures by Louis Muman

ULURAIHAI CULTURAL HERITAGE VILLAGE Highway 16, East of Edmonton (780-662-3640) • Open daily 10am-6pm until Labour Day • **CELEBRATION OF SPRING**: Featuring musicians Wally Heppner and friends, the Diamonds and more; Mon, May 24 (12-4:30pm) • **WEAVINGS FROM THE HOME**: Historic household textiles; Mon, May 24 • \$8 (adults/\$6 senior/\$4 youth/\$20 family)

VAAA GALLERY 3rd fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • **PLATINUM PERCEPTIONS**: Photographs by Allan King • Until June 12

VANDERLIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • Paintings by James Lahey, David Alexander, Sam Lam, Jonathan Forrest, and Gregory Ward. Sculpture by Isla Burns • May 21-June 8

WILDWOOD GALLERY AND STUDIO 5410-50 St, Wildwood, (780) 325-3904 • Open: Wed-Sun 11am-5pm • Art by appa • Metal, wood, resin, and clay sculptures by Pat Di Marcello and other artists • Through May

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Fl, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122 ext. 226) • Open: Mon-Fri 12-5pm • **437/373 SPECIAL PROJECTS**: Photo-based artworks by Zach Ayotte, Reece Steinberg, Erin Ignacio • Until May 21

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Matthew Jackson talks about his new book *The Canada Chronicles: A Four-Year Hitching Odyssey*; Fri, May 21 (noon) • Reading by Carmen Rodriguez; Fri, May 21 (7:30pm) • Janet Knudsen reads from her book *Porcelain Doll*; Tue, May 25 (7:30pm) • Gad Sidonie reads from *A Winter's Tale*; Thu, May 27 (7:30pm) • Doreen Kane reads from her book of poems *Someone at Fire*; Fri, May 28 (7:30pm) • Barry Dempster reads from *Words Wanting Out*, A. J. Levin reads from *Monks' Fruit*; Mon, May 31 (7:30pm)

GREENWOODS BOOKSHOPPE 7925-104 St (439-2005) • Ian McGill, author of *A Tourist's Guide to*

Glenora • Wed, May 26

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CENTRE • Room 2-27 • David Staples and Greg Southam pay tribute to Barb Tarbox and launch their new book, *Barb's Memoirs: How Barb Tarbox Turned Her Crazy Career into a Life-Saving Crusade*; Thu, May 20 (7pm)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (468-4999) • Tim Kofsky; May 21-22 • Jon Charles; May 28-29

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Improv comedy • Every Sun

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St (481-2786) • Comedy Mondays With Yik Yuk • Every Sun

RED'S WEM (481-6420) • Hypno Sundays • 9:30pm • Sebastian Steet; May 23, May 30

THEATRE

CAROUSEL Mayfield Drive Theatre, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Presented by Hamilton Theatre • A sparkling musical adaptation of Ferenc Molnár's play loosely based on an irrepressible carnival barker who is allowed to return from the dead one day and try to repair the lives of the wife and teenaged daughter he left behind • Until July 4 • Tickets available at Hamilton Theatre box office

CHERRYBLOSSOM Vancorona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

DIALOGUE AND REBUTTAL Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A Campus, 87 Ave, 112 St (492-2495) • Presented by Studio Theatre • **Constance Struve-Dencher** Beth Graham and Jonathan Christensen in Nobel Prize-winning author C.G. Xingling's philosophical cat-and-mouse about a man and a woman who fanatically debate the nature of life, death, sex and loneliness following a passionate sexual encounter • Until May 22 (8pm), matinee: Thu, May 21 (2:30pm) • \$8 • \$20 • Tickets available at Timms Centre box office

DIANE'S VANCORONA THEATRE, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Jeff Hamlin, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Jesh, Josh Dean, Davina Stewart and Leona Bravson celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's longest running improv comedy group by spoofing the 50s melodramas of Douglas Sir and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

IT'S CORY COUNTRY Azimuth Theatre, 11315-106 Ave (420-1757) • Presented by Mostly Water Theatre • May 25-29 (8pm) • \$10 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LOVE • LOVE Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard, 131-173 St • An unusual new blend of the actor, visual art and music co-created by the playwright/composer Jonathan Christensen and designer Brett Gerecke • May 21-June 5 • \$21 (adults/\$16 student) • Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

OCEAN'S ELEVEN AND A HALF Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Oasis Entertainment Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd (448-9339) • Charming criminal Harry Ocean reunites his old gang of bumbling thieves in order to pull off a daring casino heist in this musical spin of the film Ocean's 11 • Until Aug. 7 • \$34.95-\$49.95 • For tickets, call 448-9339

OH SUSANNA! The Vancorona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, www.vancorona.com/ohussana • Edmonton's live Euro-style variety show, featuring games, musical numbers and celebrity interviews, all presided over by international glamour-gal Susanna Patchmore and her co-host, Gae of Love • Sat, May 29 (1pm)

PITTI Vancorona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3939) voice box (2420-1757) • Leona Bravson, Jeff Hamlin and Davina Stewart star in this revision of director/playwright Stewart Lemons's magical 1997 Fringe play about a charming drifter who uses his power of imagination to create a grieving New England widow with a sense of closure about the fate of her husband, who disappeared during an expedition into the South American jungle • May 20-June 3 (Tue-Sat 8pm, Sat 2pm) • \$18 (adults/\$15 student/senior/Equity) • Pay-What-You-Want: Tue evening and Sat matinee; Two-for-One: Fri, May 21 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

SECRET SPACES: THE BUS PROJECT Bus, leaving from The 3rd Space, 11516-103 St (477-5955/420-1750) • Presented by Workshop West Theatre • Ron Jenkins directs Robert Corbin, Cathy Decker, Chris Fassbender, Dave Horak and Bridget Ryan in this unusual theatrical experience, in which audiences travel around Edmonton on a bus in order to witness new site-specific short plays by Ron Brown, Marty Chan, Beth Graham, Misko Quirk and Cathleen Roosterman • May 21-June 13 • \$30 (opening night/\$25 (adults/\$22 (student/senior) • Tickets available at Workshop West, TIX on the Square

THE SOUND OF MUSIC The Citadel, Shochor Theatre, 9828-1014 Ave (425-1820) • Tom Wood directs Rodgers and Hammerstein's family musical about the romance that blossoms between a widowed, emotionally fragile Austrian baron and the nonconformist, guitar-strumming nun he hires to act as governess for his seven children • Until June 6 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

SURE! UP! Jubilation Dinner Theatre, (484-2424) • An afternoon, song-filled parody of the Frankie Avalon/Annette Funicello "Beach party" movies of the 1960s set on Bongo Beach at the secluded tip of the North Saskatchewan River • Until June 20

THEATRESPORTS Vancorona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of headless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available by phone

3... 2... 1 11315-106 Ave (454-0583) • Presented by Azimuth Theatre • Two lifelong buddies get drunk, do drugs and share childhood memories while mourning the death of a mutual friend in this irreverent comedy/drama written and performed by Chris Craddock and Nathan Cuckow • Until May 23



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Rosetta Stone

Saturday, May 22

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Knights in Shadow
Stillframe
HEADRUIN
El Cid
Darksand
Portal
The Drogues

Sunday, May 23

doors 5:30 pm; show 6 pm

Train to Hawaii
Inverness
Talk Box
Brother Voodoo
HEKNOTEKNO
As Night Falls
Last Time Around
The Morellos
The Degenerates

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Warning Signs

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Resonance



By ROB BREZSNY

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 19

Wabi-sabi is your guiding principle this week, Aries. It's a Japanese term for a kind of beauty that's imperfect, transitory and incomplete. In his book *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets and Philosophers*, Leonard Koren says *wabi-sabi* differs from the Western notion that beauty resides in things that are "monumental, spectacular and enduring." It's about "the minor and the hidden, the tentative and the ephemeral: things so subtle and evanescent they are almost invisible at first glance." Be calmly eager for these small wonders, Aries. Let *wabi-sabi* be a magic spell that opens up the secret joys concealed within the passing moments of your everyday routine.

TAURUS

Apr 20 - May 20

If you've gone to college in the U.S., you've taken the SAT, a standardized test administered to high school students. It is an accurate measure of intelligence? In a recent analysis, the *Princeton Review* determined that if the great Taurus writer, William Shakespeare, had submitted his "All the world's a stage" speech for the essay section of the SAT, he would have flunked. Its language is too colourful. I suspect that you too may soon be judged or evaluated by one-dimensional minds, Taurus. Don't take

personally. They're simply not able to recognize and accommodate a soul as weighty as yours. Take their off-kilter response as a sign that you need to work harder to situate yourself in environments that fully appreciate you.

GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

I love my regular hikes to the top of idyllic Mohawk Hill. Green hills cascade in every direction. Horses graze in a nearby pasture. Red-tailed hawks soar overhead. But there is one blight: a gray metal storage structure surrounded by barbed-wire fence. At the climax of my ascent today, I rejoiced to find that this monstrosity had been improved. Artistic vandals had paid a visit, covering it with bright graffiti. The yellow, blue and red designs were mostly indecipherable except for one patch that clearly said "Test Your Strength." That brings me to the point of this week's horoscope, Gemini. Your assignment is to carry out a legal version of what the vandals did: bring dynamic, interesting disruption to a sterile, ugly scene, thereby testing your strength.

CANCER

June 21 - July 22

Your symbol for the next four weeks will be the Great Wall of China. Centuries ago, it was a 4,000-mile-long defense system. In that respect, it was an apt metaphor for the formidable barriers you've built around yourself. But the modern version of the Great Wall is only one-third the size it once was, having been reduced over the centuries by people appropriating its stones for new building projects. This reduced state, I hope, is an apt metaphor for the way you'll be dismantling your defense mechanisms between now and June 20.

LEO

July 23 - Aug 22

"I knew that my God was bigger than his," bragged U.S. Army Lt. General William G.

Boydin as he depicted a Somali guerrilla leader. "I knew that my God was a real God, and his was an idol." I can't vouch for the accuracy of Boydin's assertion, but I do know this, Leo: according to my analysis of the cosmic omens, your Supreme Being *really* is stronger, sweeter and sexier than everyone else's Supreme Beings, at least temporarily. Frankly, you don't God could kick all the other Gods' asses. I don't advise you to sic Him on anyone, though—not even on the jerks who seem to deserve it. There'd be hell to pay later if you did. On the other hand, if you and your God show extra mercy and generosity in the coming weeks, you will accrue tremendous karmic credit, which you'll be able to harvest beginning in August.

VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sept 22

Can you wait a while to receive your vindication, recognition and reward? I hope so. If you insist on your prize immediately, it will be unfinished, like a garland made of flowers that were picked before they bloomed. If you're patient, on the other hand, fate will be able to fashion you a ripper and more useful blessing. Do you need further motivation, Virgo? Here's some. One of the weak spots in your mastery of the game of life has been a lack of good timing, but lately you've been getting better at sensing the arrival of the perfect moment. Let this growing skill grow a little more.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22

I don't want to encourage you to be a lazy, crazy, hairy drier who careens from chance encounter to chance encounter without any specific intention in mind... but I do want to invite you to be an adventure-chasing, dream-intoxicated, passion-awakening wanderer who glides from experiment to experiment armed with the goal of opening your mind as far it can safely go. Head in the direction of the best smells and most intriguing mysteries, Libra.

SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21

Your fresh dilemma is actually a twisted old predicament in disguise. It's a bit prettier than it was the last time you saw it but just as knotty. Please don't underestimate it. If you imagine you can force it to disappear overnight, you'll make bumbling decisions and awkward moves. If, on the other hand, you assume you'll need steady, prolonged effort, you will attract excellent luck and unexpected help. Be a humble warrior motivated not by hatred for the problem but by love for yourself.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21

Let's talk about repression and suppression. When you repress a difficult feeling or thought, you drive it so deeply into your unconscious mind that you forget about it. In effect, you hide it from yourself out of fear. And yet because this exiled material is of crucial importance, it refuses to remain buried. It ultimately re-emerges in disguise, often as an addiction or obsession, sometimes as an illness. Suppression, on the other hand, is a healthier mechanism. It involves you moving the problematic feeling or thought away from the center of your attention but remaining aware of it. You're not motivated by fear, but by the intention to deal with the challenge at a time of your choosing. In the coming week, Sagittarius, you'll have to decide between repression and suppression. I hope you'll pick the latter.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 19

Professional handcappers say the odds are a billion-to-one that any particular person will ultimately achieve sainthood, but a mere 70,000-1 that someone will be possessed by Satan. According to my reading of the cosmic signs, however, those figures

won't apply to you Capricorns in the coming weeks. I estimate that the odds will be 900 million-to-1, while the odds are 5-1 that you will perform services and bestow blessings that qualify you for sainthood. Are you ready to explore the frontiers of ingenious, over-the-top benevolence? Goodness is your superpower.

AQUARIUS

Jan 20 - Feb 18

In his book *Weird Ideas That Work*, business consultant Robert Sutton advises companies to have as much commitment to creativity as to stability. That's why, in his opinion, they should hire a few free-thinkers who enjoy bucking the status quo and are willing to fight for their unique ideas. I think every one would benefit from heeding that advice, we all need people in our lives who regularly push us to question our assumptions. You Aquarians especially need this influence right now. Do you know any good troublemakers you can call on to get your dogmas disrupted? If not, find one.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

It's taken eight centuries, but the Dutch people have added 3,000 square miles to their country. They accomplished this feat not through the conquest of neighbouring nations but by building dykes and moving great amounts of water, gradually transforming parts of the sea into livable land. That dogged effort is a good metaphor for the work I propose for you, Pisces. Think of your unconscious mind as the sea and your conscious mind as the land. Can you imagine what it would entail for you to turn some of those watery depths into solid ground where you can take a stand? Can you imagine the satisfaction of becoming fully aware of feelings and dreams and desires that are now hidden from your view? ☺

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vive.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

FEED YOUR SOUL DAYS FOR WOMEN (479-5011) • Connect with other women and feed your soul • May 29 • Pre-registered

KARMA TASHI LING TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Loloing (Mind Training) Tape series meeting every Wed (7:30pm)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kushok Dhamcho of Namgyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7:30pm); beginners • Every Wed (7:30pm) and Sun (11am-1pm); advanced

TOM O'FLANAGAN Edmonton Art Gallery, Sir Winston Churchill Sq • A Visit with Artists Tour with Tom O'Flanagan and slide lecture • Thu, May 20 (6pm) • Free

UPWARD BOUND TOASTMASTERS Baker Centre, 10th Fl, 10025-106 St (472-2613) • Every Wed (7pm); Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership skills

WOMEN AND THE SACRED: JEWEL OF CULTURE AND TRADITIONS Stanley Milner Library Theatre, Sir Winston Churchill Sq • Readings and presentations about women and religion throughout history • Thu, May 20 (7pm)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic, Gay and Lesbian Christians

MEADOWS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shops. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys • Every Mon: Free pool; Fri Arrow-Chair, Jeffy Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON GAY AND LESBIAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-9270) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being your self is the norm

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOG) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HW NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 702A, 10242-105 St (448-1768) • www.icare-alberta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCS, Suite 45, 9912-106 St • Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate students, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a supportive environment (fall and winter terms). Contact Kris Wells (kriswells@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Vorharm (mvorharm@ualberta.ca) for info • www.ualberta.ca/~ced/ees/AgapeVerdiana.htm

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Carleton Place Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm); Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/livings (488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society. Peer-facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves.edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

OUT IS IN (492-0767) • A youth arts project about GLBT issues, and addressing homophobia in schools and in the community • For more info www.ualberta.ca/~outsin or outsin@ualberta.ca

PRILAC GLCCS, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgenders

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0030) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thurs 8pm-Sat, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Tues: Hot Butt Sun-Thurs (8pm-midnight) with DJ Danny • WED: Amateur strip with Vienna Lu, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thurs: Open house • Ladies' room, 10345-104 St • Open stage and the Weekend Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jazz • FRI: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outwalk, DJ Jazz and male stripper Downstairs: Female strip • SAT: Every Sat like new years: Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ jazz, new music with DJ Dan and Mike Downstairs: Retro music • SUN: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic: Solo: Retro music; every long weekend with DJ Jazz • Tue-Thu \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member) • Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

TRADITIONAL TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION egre@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/lings

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thurs 1-12; Fri-Sat 1-3 • Gay nightclub • Every Sun (7-12am): karaoke with Tizzy; Every Wed: game show; Every Fri: free pool; Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow-Chair • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCS), 45, 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.youth.ualberta.ca/yuy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • A facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALL STAR HIP HOP CONTEST Stars Night Club, 10551-82 Ave (445-2323) • Hip hop talent show presented by Captain Abdul • Sun, May 23, 8pm (door), 9:30pm (show)

ART OF LIVING GALA Hotel MacDonald, Empire Ballroom (488-5742) • Dining, music, and an art auction presented by the local art community and the HIV Network of Edmonton • Sat, June 5 (7pm door), 7:30pm (dinner) • \$150 • Proceeds to support the programs and services of HIV Edmonton

ARTS DISTRICT OPEN HOUSE (420-1757) • CBC Broadcast Centre/Mo'Levee and friends (last year) • The Edmonton Art Gallery: Workshops: video screenings of the PBS video series Art 21: art in the Twenty-first Century and a scavenger hunt • Milner Library: Featuring the Davis Pike Organ • Citadel Theatre: Backstage tours • Stanley A. Milner Library: Program: The Decorated Page: Making Scrapbooks and Journals, the Bill Durrant Jazz Trio, magic show by Ron Pearson • Metro Cinema: Prairie Lights: Alberta made short films and videos • Buher's Wuthering Heights • Information available at TIX on the Square • Sun, May 30 (noon-4pm)

BOYLE MCCAULEY HEALTH CENTRE Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A, 89 Ave, 112 St (422-7333 ext. 266) • An Evening of Music: Featuring Christian Mena, The North Country Ramblers, Choral Choir and Charlie Austin (piano) • Thu, June 3 (6:30pm reception/silent auction; 7:30-10:30pm show)

CANADIAN VOCAL ARTS FESTIVAL Various venues (420-1757) • Presented by Opera Nuova • June 23 to June 29 • Passes for the entire event (not including the Ambassador Centre) \$95 (adult)/\$55 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL Various venues in St. Albert (459-1542/451-8000) • Open Tue-Fri 9:30am-3:30pm; Sat 9:30am-5pm • June 1-5 • Tickets available at TicketMaster, Arden Theatre box office

DISCOVER THE CHINESE LION DANCE Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (420-1757/439-1160) • Presented by Ging Wu Kung Fu • June 1 (7-9pm) • \$11 (adult)/\$5 (student/senior)/\$20 (family) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

EDMONTON NATURALIZATION GROUP John Janzen Nature Centre (496-2925) • Celebrate the grand opening of the Native Plant Garden • Opening: May 22 (1:30pm) • Grow Native: May 22-23 • Free

EDZIMKULU A SOCIETY FOR CHILDREN WITH AIDS Santa Maria Goretti Centre, 11050-90 St (423-5964) • Fundraising dinner, local musicians and a video presentation from the initiatives in South Africa • Fri, May 21, 6pm (cocktail), 7pm (dinner) • TIX \$40

LOVE + LOVE, THE GALA Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) • Catalyst Theatre fundraiser • May 29 • Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

PARADIGM ESTEEM FASHION SHOW Red's, WED (420-1757) • I Am Beautiful Because... • May 20, 6pm (door), 5:30pm (adult/\$55 student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

RELAY FOR LIFE U of A's Foote Field, 11601-68 Ave

(437-8419) • Canadian Cancer Society, Tyler Hamilton, from Canadian Idol's first season, is scheduled to perform. Spokesperson • May 28 (7pm)

RISE AWARDS BANQUET The Palace Conference and Banquet Centre, 3223 Panora Rd (423-9698/423-9675) • Presented by the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers • Thu, May 20 (6pm)

STONY PLAIN COUNTRY MARKET OPENING Exhibition Park, Stony Plain • Fresh farm products, crafts, meet Harky the little horse, entertainment by MultiVibe and Old Esc • Sat, May 22 (9am-1pm)

LA VIE EN FRINGE CABARET TransAlta Arts Bams 10330-84 Ave (448-9000) • Presented by Fringe Theatre Adventures, featuring excerpts from upcoming Fringe Festival productions, a silent live auction and food • May 28-29 (7pm) • \$35 • Tickets available at the Fringe Theatre Adventures office

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (423-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (474-7751) • Every Thu (9pm); Music trivia with Escape Entertainment • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm) with Escape Entertainment

BILLY BUDD'S 9839-63 Ave (438-1148) • Karaoke Idol contest • Every Sat (8:30pm)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm); Hosted by Jeannie

CLAREVIEW Pub Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave (454-9928) • Every Wed

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed (9pm)

L.B.'S 23 Alkins Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue/Thurs

LEGENDS 6104-162 St (481-2786) • Every Wed (9pm)

MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon; with Jammin' Jamie

ORLANDO'S 11561-121 St (457-1195) • Every Sun (9pm)/Wed (10pm)

ORLANDO'S 1135 09-127 St (451-7799) • Every Wed/Thu (9pm)

PEPPERS Westmont Centre, 111 Ave, 135 St (451-8022) • Every Thu: Karaoke by Stonerock Productions

RATTLESHAKE SALOON (438-8878) • Karaoke Wednesdays

ROSEBOWL PIZZA 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

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If you want to place your Classified ad in VUE Weekly please phone Carol at 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

appliances for sale

White f.f. fridge and stove \$375. Heavy duty washer and dryer sets \$300. Six months warranty. 484-2764.

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1 bdrm in Historical Bldg on Ravine. New Ikea furniture loaded with features. Newer Grandin station, 1 stop to U of A 406-5871.

help wanted

Red, Queen extra thick orthopedic pillowtop boxspring & matt. new cost \$950 sacrifice \$250.
Can deliver 453-3077.

KING BED Orthopedic pillowtop MATTRESS and BOX SPRING, NEW! New cost \$1750; Sacrifice \$450. 453-3755

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music/tickets

Moving--need to sell 3 Sarah McLachlan tickets Sept. 7th at Rexall, Sec. 112, Row 2.
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artist to artist

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Need a volunteer? Forming an acting troupe? Want someone to jam with? Place up to 20 words FREE, providing the ad is non-profit. Ads of more than 20 words will be subject to regular price or cruel editing. Free ads run for four weeks depending on available space. For more info please phone Clients at 426-1996/fax 426-2896/m office@vue.ab.ca or drop it off at 10303-108 St

Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication

Business Smarts for the Arts
May 27, 28 & June 5 www.artistinbusiness.ca Register: The Paint Spot 432 0240

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Call 482-5867

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Call 482-5867

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FILM ACTING WEEKEND INTENSIVE

Successfully transform your stage craft to camera technique with acclaimed Vancouver film coach MARK BRANDON. Master the two most critical elements that compel film directors to choose one actor over another. Previous acting experience or training required. Saturday and Sunday, May 29 & 30th, 10-5pm. TransAlta Arts Barn, PCL Studio Theatre. Price: \$189.
Info: Marie Zydek (780) 450-4393

music lessons

Beginner piano and singing lessons
10 yrs experience. Central location.
Learn on grand piano. 481-6262

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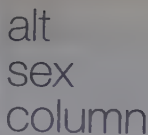
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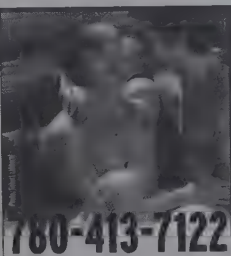


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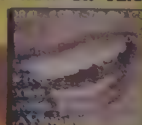


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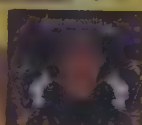
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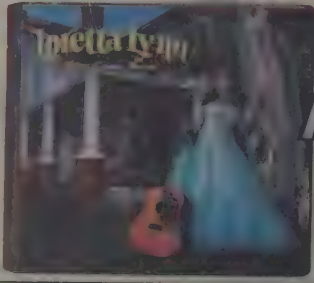
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FRONT: THE MP3 BLOGGING EXPLOSION - 4 / MUSIC: HOT LITTLE ROCKET - 21

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MORGAN SPURLOCK
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WITH THAT

BY DARREN ZENKO - 36

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

The Third Annual CJSR Battle of the Bands is getting underway and we are looking for performers. The competition will start at the end of June at the Victory Lounge (the lower level of the Starlite Room) as well as at Stars. Some of the shows and the final night of competition will be all-ages.

We are looking for bands to compete for the \$1,000 cash prize. Anyone interested in playing should contact Brian at 421-1942.



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ON THE COVER

Like the films of Michael Moore, Morgan Spurlock's *Super Size Me* is finding a big audience by combining comedy with populist, anti-corporate politics. Spurlock also wound up looking a lot more like Michael Moore by the time filming was over and his new nothin'-but-McDonald's diet had wreaked havoc on his physique • 36

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Garbage in, less garbage out

Like, so, what
actually happens to
the trash you send
out to be recycled?

By JAY SMITH

In some circles, trash is a subject of mythic proportions. Given that we Canadians produce waste at a rate that far exceeds international standards (each one of us generated some 1,019 kilograms of refuse in 2000, according to Statistics Canada), there's much to be said for the detritus of our consumerism. As much as we might like to ignore our refuse and refuse to acknowledge its persistent presence on our planet, it remains.

Those of us who have been

around town for some time remember the chaos that ensued in the mid-'80s when the city of Edmonton realized we were about to reach the capacity of our Cloverbar landfill. Edmontonians were discarding one million tonnes of garbage a year—at that rate, municipal authorities projected that Cloverbar would be filled by 1992. After seeking out numerous

problem off at its source and reduce the amount of garbage that was going into our landfill in the first place. Accordingly, in 1986 Edmonton initiated an experiment in recycling that was one of the first such programmes on the continent. By 1988, the Edmonton municipal government implemented its city-wide blue-box recycling programme.

Although I've always been an ardent recycler and a composter, a recent conversation with some similarly-minded friends made me realize that our ignorance regarding the nature of Edmonton's waste management was remarkable. None of us professed environmentalists had a clue what actually happens to the contents of our blue bags once we set them on the curbside. No one

FEATURE

other potential sites for a new landfill, all of which were rejected because the various communities surrounding each proposed site refused to accept the landfill near their home, our illustrious and notoriously "anti-business" mayor Jan Reimer wondered whether there was anything we could do to head the

SEE PAGE 4

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knew whether the rumour we had heard—that most of the recyclable material is actually tossed into the landfill—was true. So I took it upon myself to find out for sure.

DAVID SUZUKI writes that one of the major problems in our society, particularly vis-à-vis the environment, is that we no longer witness the relationships between things. Almost everything we purchase is sheathed in layers of plastic packaging, which appears to miraculously seal its contents from the germ jostlings of the world at large, and which can be easily shunted into garbage-can oblivion once its job is done. Or another example: I rinse out my peanut butter jars and fold up my newspapers, shove them into the already bulging blue plastic bag, tie the knot with a double bow, then abandon the whole package on what may as well be the edge of the known universe.

Fortunately for Edmontonians, witnessing the dark underbelly of consumer culture is a only matter of visiting the Edmonton Waste Management Centre. Although located far from the urban centre, on 131 Avenue and Meridian Road, the facility is not difficult to find in a vehicle and offers free tours for groups of 10 people or more. The Centre occupies nearly 600 acres of land and is loosely oriented around three centres: the Edmonton composting facility, the materials recovery facility and the

Cloverball landfill.

The tour that I was able to attend began by surveying the former. Led by former high-school teacher Don Kenyon, my small entourage of

"aides" (mother/driver and sister) joins a Biology 20 class from Bev Facey High School; we board a "COW" (or "Classroom on Wheels") to survey the facility. The composting facility is the newest addition to the Waste Management Centre, having opened in 2000, and is the largest of its kind in North America. Here, I learned, *everything* that we dispose as garbage is taken into a giant sorting bay, where workers remove all obviously non-compostable material. The remaining material, including plastic garbage bags and all other bits of refuse, are dumped into massive mixing drums and combined with "biosolids" (sewer sludge, which is exactly what you fear it is), where the process of decomposition begins. A couple of days later, the material is screened to remove larger non-biodegradable components. From there, the material resides in three aeration bays for three weeks, where the actual composting takes place. The bays are stench-free because the air is filtered

through a set of biofilters, small fields of tightly-packed wood chips which are composted once their efficiency wanes. One more refinement removes the last of non-biodegrad-

their garbage since the '80s—and especially since the first Eco Station was built in 1992—what we throw away makes good compost. Various tests required for federal and interna-

tional certification allow the compost to be used in all but food-based growing endeavours. (This is because at the end of the process, residues of some hazardous chemicals remain in the mix.) One of the goals of the centre is to begin marketing the compost on a larger scale.

The materials recovery facility is where the myriad of post-consumer waste is sorted for reclamation. Outside the facility are areas devoted to smashing old roads and broken sidewalks for reuse in road construction and sorting metals (fridges, ovens, appliances and electronics). Inside, all the material from the blue bags and recycling bins is sorted manually and, glass excluded, formed into bales that are sent out throughout North America for actual recycling. (Glass, which is usually

able material, and the garbage has been transformed.

BECAUSE EDMONTONIANS have been diverting hazardous waste from

broken during the transportation process, spills from a giant spout and accumulates in a giant heap in an alcove in the parking lot.) From the glass-enclosed pedway snaking along

the edge of the building, the intricate array of machines and conveyor belts looks like a scene from Willy Wonka's chocolate factory.

THIS LEAVES US with the true trash. Because of composting and recycling, the Cloverbar landfill has yet to reach its capacity. In 2002, for instance, 105,272 tonnes of city waste was composted, 32,716 tonnes from single and multifamily dwellings was recycled, and only 96,569 tonnes went into the landfill. This represents a nearly 60 per cent diversion rate. At this rate, Cloverbar is expected to remain open until 2010. Because, as Kenyon explains, the facility has come to embrace the mentality that we simply cannot continue to toss away trash into our increasingly polluted environment, the goal is reduce what goes into the landfill even further. Of course, this goal can only be reached if citizens co-operate.

Perched atop the 12 storeys of garbage, at the waste dropoff zone of the landfill, my head is spinning from three hours of intense information absorption. My sister and I peer out the window of the schoolbus: a plow is shifting piles of trash, a dumptruck is unloading, a man in his 20s is emptying the box of his pick-up truck. My sister nudges me; she can't believe how much perfectly usable furniture is being thrown away. The man finishes tossing his trash and wipes his hands, task completed. We're incredulous when he reaches into the cab of his truck for two pop bottles, which he winds up to pitch to the top of the heap. ●



Funny girls.

If it's not one thing, it's your mother - Bette MacDonald hosts *Becoming My Mother* from the CBC Winnipeg Comedy Festival. Then laughter looms as four unusual sales clerks take you to the dark side of retail in the comedy special *To Die 4*.

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Electile dysfunction

"Lesser of two evils" doesn't even begin to describe choices in federal election

By CHRIS BOUTET

Man oh man, what a choice we Canadians are going to have to make on June 28. I mean, *someone's* going to have to be prime minister when we all wake up the next morning—but who the hell do you vote for? In one corner, you've got the borderline separatist, borderline racist, borderline American and total political cyanide pill that is Conservative leader Stephen Harper; in the other corner, you've got the directionless and corrupt head of a bloated and tired party that gave up on trying to care about the will of the Canadian people years ago in Liberal leader Paul Martin. Is there any way to describe this situation without trotting out poor old "lesser of two evils," that most

Martin thinks this will be. The Liberals' decision to go with a media campaign that plays down Martin's achievements (mostly because he doesn't have many) while hammering away at Harper's deficiencies is surely a little puzzling. I mean, this kind of thing plays out great in the American political scene, which is actually based on a two-party system; but up here in Canada, our political climate just isn't sensationalist and adversarial enough to carry these sorts of tactics.

MAYBE CANADIANS are just more cynical or something, but I know when I see a TV spot or a print ad deriding Harper, it doesn't exactly make me rush out and grab a pencil and a Scantron sheet so I can start practicing filling in circles in preparation for the one next to Martin's name on the ballot. If anything, focusing on the shortcomings of your competition rather than your own strengths just makes it seem like you don't actually have any. As one *Globe and Mail* columnist put it last

OPINION

week, attack ads are like nitroglycerin: they can either explode

your campaign or explode in your face. And right now, it's looking like Martin should consider expanding his party's much-touted healthcare coverage to include cosmetic surgery.

Not surprisingly, all this is working out in Layton's favour. The anti-Harper campaign is making Martin look like a mudslinging dick to Liberal and Conservative supporters alike, and they aren't doing much to hurt Harper, since everyone who was going to vote for him already knows what kind of pro-military, anti-immigration crap he stands for. And so far the latest opinion polls following the launch of the ad campaign have reflected this; Liberal support is slipping, Conservative support is standing pat and the NDP is steadily gaining ground in the rear. If Martin continues to repulse Canadians with his scurrilous campaign tactics and Harper just keeps being himself, chances are that more and more people are going to gravitate towards the third option, no matter who they are. So who knows? If Layton can hang tight and stay out of the crossfire, he might just be having that feelings-heavy tree-dream discussion with the Minister of the Environment in his comfy new Prime Minister's chair.

Or, you know, everyone will just vote Liberal again. Whatever seems more plausible. ●



NDP leader Jack Layton discusses his feelings with a potential voter

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Hey Superstore, Give me a Break!



I got a part-time job at **Superstore** as a cashier last year. I work hard, but it's okay; the new union contract is pretty good. I've got decent wages, a dental plan, and **Superstore** has to schedule my work hours around my university classes.

I'm young, and I like to look a certain way. After I was hired I wore my nose piercing to work, and no one seemed to mind. Customers were cool with it. My supervisor just wanted me to be on time, and to do my job. I did. No problems.

But things changed. All of a sudden, doing my job wasn't enough. One day the boss told me to "take that thing out", or I'd be fired. I couldn't believe it.

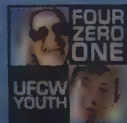
At first, I felt like quitting. But I need my job. I gave in, and took out my piercing, so I wouldn't be "insubordinate". But now I've found a way to fight back.

At work, I wear my hair the way they tell me to. I wear my Superstore uniform. But I believe that I should have the right to be an individual and have my own look. At least in some small way. My union agrees with me. We have filed a grievance.

My union rep says we have a shot at winning, but she can't say for sure. I also know that the process will take a long time. But, win or lose, I'm glad someone sees my point of view. I'm glad someone is there to fight for me.

I don't know what **Superstore's** problem is. This is my one little thing.
Why can't they just give me a break?

VIEW 401



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GO

VUE WEEKLY

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Last night an MP3J saved my life

Musical weblogs spread the gospel of offbeat, independent music

BY CHAD HUCULAK

From pirate radio stations on seaboards transmitting American rock to the youth of England in the early 1960s to bedroom disc jockeys broadcasting groundbreaking hip-hop, decades of bland corporate radio have forced people to find countless ways to get underground music distributed and heard. But today, thanks to the Internet, those floating radio stations and DIY studios have given way to a new medium for free musical expression: the MP3 blog.

Blogs first began to rise to popularity in early 2000; most

MEDIA

many blog entries in which they rhapsodized over certain songs or tried to create buzz around hot, emerging bands. Instead of just reading and imagining what the song sounded like, the reader was actually able to listen to the track while reading what the MP3J (a term coined by Ben Walker in an NPR radio story about the phenomenon) thought about it. It's a far cry from the predetermined setlists of corporate-owned radio stations, with barely an artist credit to be heard.

The forefather of MP3 blogs is said to be Matthew Perpetua, who began writing Fluxblog

(newflux.blogspot.com) in February 2002. Frustrated by the lack of a college radio station in his area, the 24-year-old art school grad took his existing blog and began posting MP3s on it to express his musical tastes. Perpetua readily admits that other people experimenting with the MP3 format at the time were a strong influence, but after settling into a daily routine of posting songs and writing, word-of-mouth made Fluxblog the only MP3 blog worth hitting.

"It's very flattering when they give me credit for inspiring them," Perpetua says of the sites that have sprung up in Fluxblog's wake. "I think that there is a lot of potential in the [MP3 blog] format. It's all about curating, so I like to see how different people do it.

It's a lot like mix-tapes and

mix CDs—everybody can do it, but people who are really good at it find a way to express a point of view."

AS FOR THE CONTENT of these blogs, most MP3Js show a preference for harder-to-find music, from esoteric indie-rock to obscure jazz, music that tends not to see the light of day on the radio or in industry magazines. "I

SEE PAGE 10



ERIC UHLICH



BIOTECH

Supreme Court seeds victory to Monsanto

Wow, how about all that biotechnology news lately, huh? It's just a shame that it's all been bad for the more environmentally inclined among us. Indeed, as fellow *Vue* writer Steven Sandor writes below, this has been nothing short of a terrible month for opponents of the biotech industry and its genetically modified wares. But just in case they hadn't yet had enough, said opponents were sadly dealt another decisive blow this week as the Supreme Court of Canada ruled against Saskatchewan farmer Percy Schmeiser, upholding Monsanto's claim to a patent on a gene in its GM canola seed.

Schmeiser and his wife had spent the past seven years embroiled in a court battle with biotech giant Monsanto, which was suing Schmeiser for planting its patented canola seed on his land without the company's consent. Schmeiser, however, maintained that the seeds were merely blowing onto his land from neighbouring farms. Schmeiser also argued that a company can't patent a plant anyway, pointing to an earlier Supreme Court ruling that stated higher life forms (in that ruling's case, a mouse) could not be patented. Schmeiser had already lost the case in lower courts, but managed to appeal to the Supreme Court. Unfortunately, the outcome was no better.

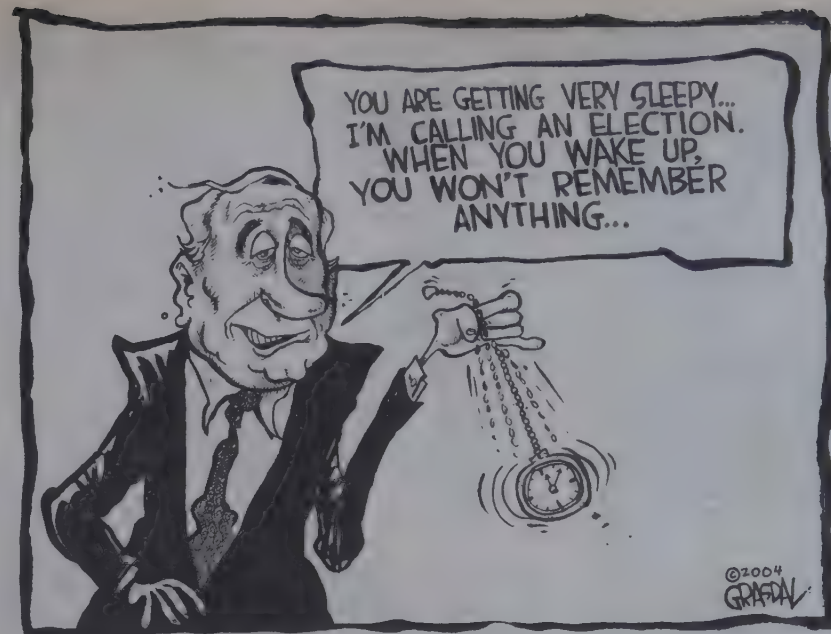
In a 5-4 decision, the court upheld the patent Monsanto held on its herbicide-resistant Roundup Ready canola seed, ruling that Schmeiser indeed infringed on the patent by willfully growing the plant without a license. The crux of Monsanto's argument was that since they owned the patent on both the herbicide-resistant gene and the insertion process, they should by extension maintain ownership of the plant itself. According to the CBC, the court wrote that "By cultivating a plant containing the patented gene and composed of the patented cells without license, [the Schmeisers] thus deprived Monsanto of the full enjoyment of its monopoly."

On the plus side, the court also ruled that Schmeiser would not have to pay the \$200,000 in court costs and damages that Monsanto was asking for, which Schmeiser called a "moral victory." What an optimist. —CHRIS BOUTET

GM feast or famine

It has been an atrocious month for opponents of genetically-modified food products. [See? What did we just tell you? —Ed.] Just one week after the EU voted to lift its ban on the sale of GM food on the continent, the United Nations came out with a ringing endorsement of GM food as an answer to the world's famine crisis.

A report from the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was released last week commending the



progress of biotechnology, but lamenting that science is being used to alter primarily cash crops such as cotton, corn and canola, and not food staples such as wheat, rice and cassava. It also warns that the six major nations that produce genetically-modified crops (of which Canada is one) must do a better job of sharing their GM finds with developing nations so farmers in the Third World can plant crops that are more resistant to pests and severe weather.

"Biotechnology should complement—not replace—conventional agricultural technologies," stated the FAO. "Biotechnology can speed up conventional breeding programmes and may offer solutions where conventional methods fail. It can provide farmers with disease-free planting materials and develop crops that resist pests and diseases, reducing use of chemicals that harm the environment and human health. It can provide diagnostic tools and vaccines that help control devastating animal diseases. It can improve the nutritional quality of staple foods such as rice and cassava and create new products for health and industrial uses."

In the past, the UN has chided Third World African nations that refuse to take genetically-modified food aid from Canada and the United States. The UN believes that GM food crops can produce higher yields, which would clearly be of great benefit to a world which is predicted to have its population explode by another two billion by the year 2050. —STEVEN SANDOR

IRAQ

Undiplomatic immunity

Well, it seems that following the handover on June 30, the new Iraqi government will indeed have the "full sovereignty" over the state that they were promised—as long as they don't, you know, try to charge any British or American soldiers for the horrendous abuses they visited upon Iraqi prisoners.

In a stunning display of the

accountability and freedom that being a democratic society clearly affords, the UN announced following a vote yesterday that the Brits and Americans will be guaranteed immunity from any charges of war criminality that the Iraqi government may choose to pursue. The reasoning? Well, according to one British military official, with that new government and all, the legal system will seem so big and scary and confusing to the people of Iraq that they may just forget who their "friends" are. "The legal situation in Iraq will be very difficult after June 30, with some confusion over where jurisdiction lies," explained the unnamed official.

According to reports in the *Guardian*, military sources have stated that the question of immunity from prosecution was integral to obtaining military agreement on the UN's handover resolution, due to be published by the middle of next month. The resolution will also lift the arms embargo against Iraq and allow the country to rearm its army in preparation for taking over the nation's security once the occupying forces decide to take off.

Naturally, like most every other news development regarding Iraq, the immunity stipulation flew largely under the radar in the States. But in the British House of Commons, the shit hit the fan on Monday, as British MPs expressed horror at the arrangement, demanding that Iraqi citizens should have some form of legal recourse for the brutality that some of their country endured—or at the very least, that there should be a military ombudsman based in Iraq who could investigate claims against coalition troops and suggest further action. Which, of course, will totally happen. —CHRIS BOUTET

ELECTION

What he said

It's been, what, less than a week since the federal election was called, but already the Liberal Party has started the mud-

slinging in earnest, with a series of TV ads appearing across Canada last week urging voters to go to www.stephenharper-said.ca, a Liberal website which collects inflammatory quotes from the new Conservative leader.

"Mr. Harper's quotes aren't random musings or slips of the tongue," reads the page's intro. "He's held extreme views for a long time—as the head of the far-right-wing National Citizens' [sic] Coalition, and as a former Alliance Party member. As you'll see here, Mr. Harper's ideas would dramatically change Canada. There can be no doubt about it." Among the quotes reproduced on the site are "Canada appears content to become a second-tier socialist country, boasting ever more loudly about its economy and social services to mask its second-rate status" and "Albertans should 'build firewalls around Alberta.'"

Under each and every quote, in a tiny font, is a button that offers visitors the chance to read the whole quote in context. (By the way, the whole quote, taken from a letter Harper wrote to Premier Ralph Klein while Harper was still president of the National Citizens' Coalition, was "It is imperative to take the initiative, to build firewalls around Alberta, to limit the extent to which an aggressive and hostile federal government can encroach upon legitimate provincial jurisdiction." That's a little less sensational than the abbreviated quote that appears on the website and the complementary Liberal TV ad.)

In 1993, the Liberals got a major boost in the election when the then-ruling Tories launched a dirty ad campaign maligning Jean Chrétien's facial features. Then-Prime Minister Kim Campbell never recovered from that gaffe. That move established that Canadians reacted negatively to negative campaigning, and yet a decade later, the Liberals are pushing that envelope once again. If Canadian attitudes haven't changed, the Liberals may have just done a major campaign favour for the Tories. —STEVEN SANDOR

By TARA NARWANI

You don't mess around with GM

On May 11, when Monsanto announced that it would not be bringing Roundup Ready wheat—a genetically modified variety resistant to its proprietary herbicide of the same name—to market, I was shocked. It was an unexpected victory for farmer's associations, environmentalists and consumer advocates in the war to put the brakes on the use of plant biotechnology before its full implications are better understood.

Since then, however, there have been two alarming developments. First, the EU decided to lift its moratorium on GM foods by allowing the sale of GM sweet corn in labeled cans, a move that will undoubtedly sway Monsanto's decision to shelve their GM wheat. As well, because the cultivation of GM varieties will still be illegal in the EU, increased production of these varieties will likely occur in Canada.

And then there's the case of Percy Schmeiser. This week, Schmeiser lost his appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada and was found to be in violation of the Patent Act, despite his claim that the GM canola seeds blew onto his land. While the 5-4 decision was far from unanimous, the majority judges stated that Schmeiser knowingly used patented genes and cells. So now, in essence, biotechnology companies can patent a whole plant, a life form.

As a researcher in plant genetics, what I found most worrisome about the arguments presented by the majority judges is that they drew the analogy between genes and Lego blocks. The argument goes that if there is a patent on Lego blocks, regardless of the structure the Lego blocks are built into, use of the Lego blocks without license is a violation of the Patent Act. In this case, the Lego block is a genetically modified gene and the structure is a plant.

The problem is that organisms are not just the sum of their genes. In fact, scientists are only just beginning to uncover the dizzying interplay between genes, proteins and environment. The Supreme Court ruling ignores this reality and underscores the obsolescence of patent law in Canada, which was developed to protect innovations in industrial machinery a century ago.

One has to wonder what the implications of this precedent could be. The patenting of more and more organisms, perhaps? The growing commodification of nature? Time, as they say, will tell. Regardless, clearly the time has come for our lawmakers to rewrite the Patent Act for the biotechnology age. ©

see my weblog as music evangelism, saving the world from the top 40 one listener at a time," says David Gutowski, proprietor of the Large Hearted Boy blog (blog.largeheartedboy.com).

Karen Wickman, a 20-year-old Los Angeles college student who updates her blog, Burned by the Sun (burnedbythesun.blogspot.com), with weekly MP3 postings ranging from rare Beatles outtakes to highlights from the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers soundtrack, agrees with Gutowski's sentiment. "I'm one of those dorks who always has to make everyone listen to an album I love," says Wickman, whose site receives more than 1,000 hits a day, "because I want them to love it as much as I do. It's a good feeling to present a buried treasure to an audience, and to champion your favourite underappreciated band."

For many MP3Js, it's the freedom the medium provides that motivates

them. Said the Gramophone (www.tangmonkey.com/blogs/music) administrator and McGill graduate Sean Michaels sees MP3 blogs as a way to expand his music writing beyond the constraints of more mainstream avenues. "There's something really liberating about the free-for-all blog format," he says. "You can really play with stream-of-consciousness, abstract and near-delirious imagery, without an editor breathing down your neck."

OBVIOUSLY, all this unauthorized posting and distributing of copyrighted music is bound to have its legal complications. In a cursory attempt to cover themselves, nearly all MP3Js run a disclaimer on their blogs proclaiming that the tracks are for evaluation purposes only and highly urging visitors to purchase the album if you enjoyed the tracks. As well, the files are always rotated and never kept on longer than a week—a move to discourage other sites from linking to the songs.

But luckily, since the type of songs

these blogs tend to post travel well below the radar of most big record labels, lawsuits have yet to reach the MP3Js. Michaels did once receive a cease and desist order through the server that hosted Said the Gramophone, but was never told which file was the offending one. On the other hand, he has been contacted by numerous artists delighted to find their songs on his weblog. Brian Michael Roti was thrilled to see his song "Magazine Memories" posted on Gramophone, as was Dave DeCastris, whose song "Upchuck" was also championed on Michaels's site. "It made me feel good to see one of my songs being shared and reviewed," DeCastris said, comparing the feeling to "seeing your juicy new boobs sans scars three months after they were created, being drooled over by horny men and envious women."

For some artists, the benefits of appearing on an MP3 blog are substantial. When Fluxblog posted LCD Soundsystem's dance-punk song "Yeah (Stupid Version)," for instance, the track spread across the Net like

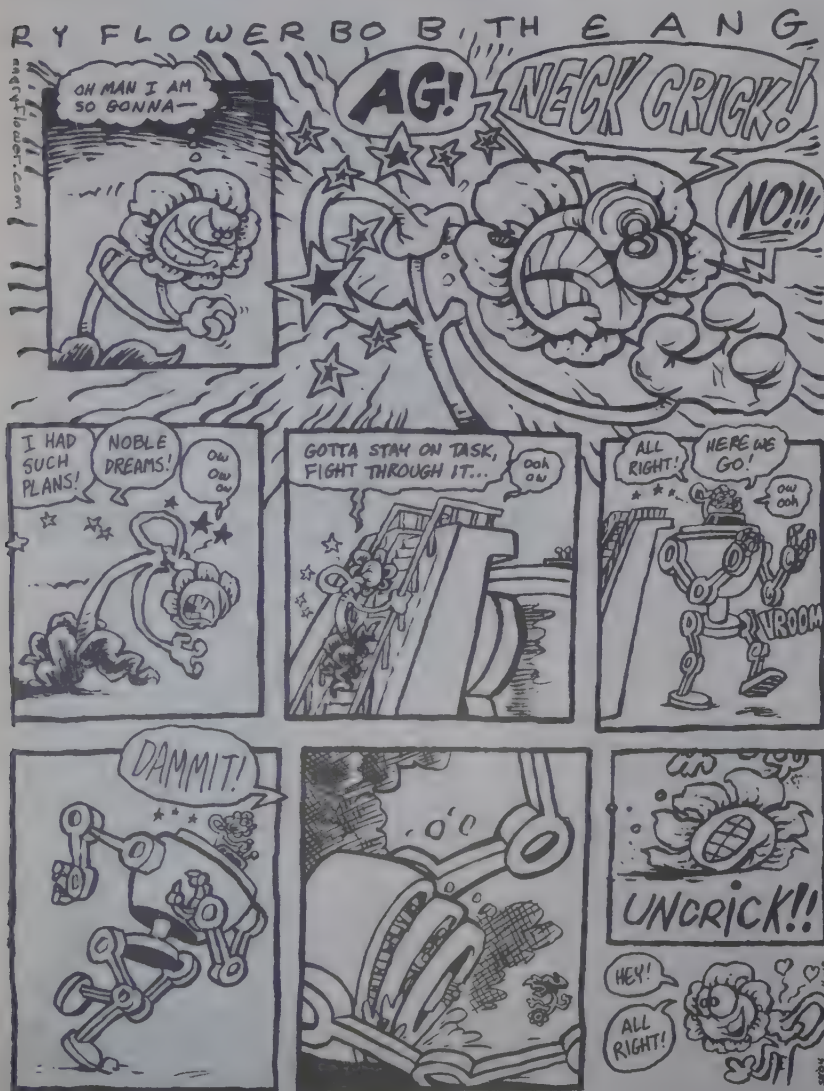
wildfire, appearing on countless message boards and eventually making it onto college radio playlists. "A lot of what I post is quite obscure," says Perpetua. "And it can be hard for them to find an audience, so if I can help them out, then I feel as though I've done my job."

Michaels agrees with the perception that MP3Js do more good than bad. "I know for a fact that Said the Gramophone helps to sell records," he says. "I've spoken to many readers who have picked up albums or gone to shows after hearing a band on my blog. It's the most gratifying aspect of the whole affair."

BUT MP3 BLOGS may be sitting beneath a sword of Damocles. Matt Ness, a 35-year-old technical writer who runs the blog Ready Rock (www.livejournal.com/users/moebius_rex), worries that as more and more blogs start popping up, it's only a matter of time until the music industry sits up and takes notice. "There's plenty more self-styled Lester

and Phillip Sherbourne imitators out there who will jump on the bandwagon as soon as they catch wind of what's going on," he says. "Everyone's a music critic, you know. I'm sure that eventually we'll end up with some dude who's determined to cover every nook and cranny of the Dave Matthews Band/Phish/Hootie and the Blowfish bootleg universe—and that, unfortunately, will probably be the point where the RIAA starts running around with its collective hair on fire."

"I think that we will start seeing a mainstreaming, and I think that will be when the bubble collapses," prophesies Keith Causin of Teaching the Indie Kids How to Dance Again (teachingtheindiekidstodanceagain.blogspot.com) prophesies. "The RIAA will start staking out the blog circuit, Matt Perpetua and Sean from Said the Gramophone will get fat A&R deals, and the rest of us will be shut down or start going corporate, taking ads and asking permission. And that'll be the death of it. I hope that doesn't happen, but that's where I see this going." ☛



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by Jonathan Ball, Registered Fraud, www.jonathanball.com



infinite lives

By DARREN ZENKO

DS ex machina

Where were we, those two long weeks ago? Oh yeah... the just-passed **E3 trade show**, the annual geek-all and nerd-all of videogames, where around every corner lies a glittering Showcase Showdown (complete with elegantly gesturing models) calculated to create little lakes of drool. Not necessarily right there on the floor—that's a definite slipping hazard; pains are taken to keep a mop squad on duty as proof against liability—but out there in the wide world, where screen-shots and gameplay videos and tidbits of information are snapped up, where calendars are marked, **pre-orders** are made, and hype is built.

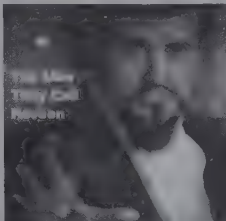
So why does the atmosphere feel so **weird and creepy**, right now? Sure, there's lots of cool stuff coming up, but there also seems to be a lot of talk and worry and general fretting about the long-term prospects of the game business. This happens every year, of course—even more so since the Internet stock bubble burst and instilled in many armchair message-board jockeys a soul-fear of finding themselves hanging broken and bound in the smoking ruins of the videogame industry with the word "**POLLYANNA**" scrawled on their bodies in goat's blood by **savage tribes of ex-gamers** (made blood-simple by violent games, of course) who wander the wastes garroting each other with the frayed remains of their Dual Shock cables. Still, this year seems *particularly* glum.

The weird thing is, lots of this glumness seems to stem directly from

the act of looking forward to the Next Generation of consoles, an activity that was once, you know... **immensely pleasant**. Now, it's all... uh... well, here; let's hear it from a guy whose life *literally depends* on the health of the videogame gravy train:

"We are concerned about the current direction of the industry.... Some of the people in the industry still believe we can simply beef up the current technology in order to provide a constant supply of games to people. We don't agree with that."

That was Nintendo president **Satoru Iwata**, speaking to the BBC News online. Now, of course, that's just press-release propaganda—though "[not] [agreeing]" with the idea of a "constant supply of games" feels a bit counter-propagandive. But that's a Nintendo specialty, giving grim-faced pronouncements about what the game



Satoru
Iwata

industry is or *isn't*, will be or won't be. When they're talking from the top, as in this case, they have a magisterial, almost hypnotic, presence that games folks (myself included; Nintendo honchos are like **The Man They Call Reven**) tend to take seriously. Even if (sometimes, especially when) they're talking out of their ass. It's pure seniority. I mean, this is *Nintendo*. The company that led videogames out of the wilderness; their name is a generic term, and has been for a while... just like Kleenex or VCR:

"You can't mow the... the goddamn lawn, but you can spend all weekend downstairs playing that damn Nintendo?"

"I dunno." <...and it's a goddamn Genesis, mom, which you'd know if you actually fucking cared about me...>

Nintendo doesn't "agree with" constant incremental increase in visual per-

fection (and audio perfection; so many gamers are surround-sound nerds) coupled with stagnation in the development of the total gameplay experience. So what's their solution? The **Nintendo DS**. This is... Okay, this is a damn weird machine. Two screens, like an old "Game & Watch," one of which is a touch-screen, with all the PDA-ness that implies. A microphone built in—for voice commands, audio messaging... both? It'll have a wi-fi standard wireless connection, in addition to its proprietary wireless game link... which will supposedly be fast enough that whole games can be transferred, eliminating the "everybody has to have a cartridge" barrier to local-network gameplay. Ungh! Number-crunching speed 'n' power beyond the old N64.... Oh! Speaking of cartridges, this crazy little chip-burger will be backward (or sideways) compatible with the GBA, continuing an ancient dynasty stretching back to when **my maternal grandfather** was still alive and I couldn't stop playing *Tetris* on my cousin's black-and-white Game Boy while the majesty of the Rocky Mountains spread out around me, and I didn't know how good I had it. The DS will also—you heard it

here first, kids—feature retractable corkscrew, ruler and scissors.

What a beast! The possibilities are endless... the probabilities, much more finite. I honestly don't know what to make of this. Nintendo wants to play to its strengths against Sony's PSP portable, both of which will be loosed upon the world around the same time. Sony's tying their little dingus (which looks a lot like the doomed Atari Lynx handheld) to a Hot New Media Format (HNMF) for games, movies and music, a strategy that **may** or may not blow up in their faces—remember Beta? Nintendo's tying their not-quite-so-little dingus to the only successful family of handheld game systems in the history of the universe, as far as Mankind has been able to detect. So, I guess it could go either way.

To be, once again, continued. ⑥

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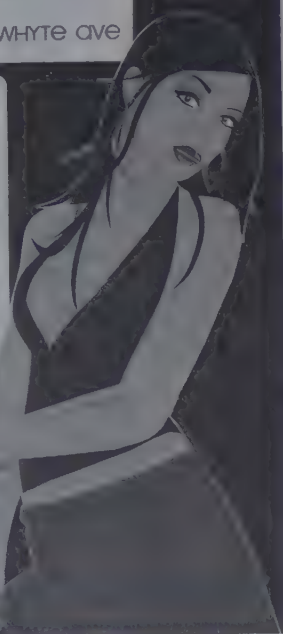
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By RICHARD BURNETT

Risen to prom-inence

It's one thing for gays to come out of the closet. But their folks have to come out too as *parents* of a gay child—a process that carries with it pretty much all of the baggage that coming out itself entails.

"Yes, my son is gay," parents learn to say at cocktail parties. "No, my daughter isn't married but she and her partner Mary are the proud mothers of a baby boy, and now they can get married!"

If you're my parents, you do it week after week because their son is living proof that gay life has gone from being the love that dare not speak its name to the love that won't shut the hell up. And how!

From the time I was banned in Winnipeg to the time the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary investigated complaints that my column is pornographic (the charges were later dropped), my parents have stood by me week after week, even on national TV.

Which is why I so enjoyed watching the upcoming CTV movie *Prom Queen*. The flick is a deliberately cartoonish, feel-good fictional drama inspired by the true story of Marc Hall, the Catholic

teenager from Oshawa, Ontario who wanted to bring his boyfriend to his high school prom in June 2002. His request was denied by his school and again by the Catholic School Board. The story made international headlines, climaxing with Hall winning the right to bring his boyfriend the actual day of the prom. It was a fairytale that the media could not have scripted any better.

What I found equally amazing, though, were Hall's parents and what they endured. You can see it on their faces in *Prom Queen*, especially mother Emily Hall, a salt-of-the-earth Acadian mom and devout Catholic beautifully portrayed by veteran Quebec actress Marie-Tifo. When Marc, played by Aaron Ashmore, comes out, she tells him, "You have blue hair and a poster of Celine Dion on your wall—we know!"

Hall's hair today, by the way, is brown. When I track down the 19-year-old in Oshawa he seems still to be very much the young man Canada saw growing up on TV when his legal battle made the evening news night after night. "It was very weird seeing myself on TV the first time because the news people didn't even interview me," Hall tells me over the phone. "I got a call 15 minutes before [the piece] aired to say, 'Marc, it's on!' It's still weird to see me on TV. But over time I got used to doing interviews. I try to watch how I say certain things because sometimes [reporters] take stuff out of context."

Hall is proof not all kids who've grown up in the *Will and Grace* era have it easy. Queer kids today are not all ignorant of the contributions of older queer activists who paved the way so today's gay high school grads could even fathom

bringing a date to the prom. Marc in turn took the baton and ran with it. "My prom was so much fun," he says. "The first slow dance was fun. It wasn't awkward—it was normal. People came up to me to say how happy they were I was there. Those who weren't in agreement didn't say anything. Everyone has their own opinion. I guess what I've learnt is to get along with people who don't agree with me."

Since his case (which returns to court this coming winter) has faded from the headlines, Hall has taken a year off and hopes to attend the University of Waterloo this autumn. He's also moved out of his parents' home but hasn't left his hometown of Oshawa, where he rents his own apartment. That's where he'll host a screening party when *Prom Queen* airs on CTV.

CTV and Toronto-based Tapestry Productions sent a limo to pick up Hall's mom and dad for the official premiere at Toronto's Regent Theatre. "It was funny because we got there 30 minutes early and the red carpet wasn't rolled out!" he laughs.

The Hall family weren't laughing two years ago, though. "My mom has a boxful of scrapbooks with all the [newspaper clippings]," Hall says. "She has everything, even an award I got. I took a friend over a few weeks ago and we went through the box."

Can Hall handle all the attention again when his case returns to court? He sighs. "I wish it was over and done with because I'm anxious to hear the [final] answer. But I have no regrets. This was worth it in the long run." ●

Prom Queen airs Tuesday, June 1 on CTV. Check local listings for times.

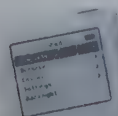
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SMALL CAN. STRONG BEER.

Buy me some pizza and Cracker Jack

Dave Bidini goes down swinging with Italian sports saga *Baseballissimo*

By DAN RUBINSTEIN

I could go into extra innings pointing out just how many reasons I had to love this book. As soon as I read the opening of the adapted excerpt that appeared in the October 2003 issue of *Toro*, I was salivating. And not just because Italian ballplayers eat *cometti* and *brioche* in the dugout during games.

Baseballissimo: My Summer in the Italian Minor Leagues, by Rheostatics rhythm guitarist and globetrotting sports curiosity-seeker Dave Bidini, was truly my type of tale. It had everything: the fish-out-of-water anecdotes of a Canadian in an exotic foreign land; the absurdity of Italian baseball, in a place where the sport has a fascinating history featuring Joe DiMaggio and home runs hit into the ocean; the added depth of the author coming to terms with his Italian heritage; the drama of following a team for an entire season; even the fact that Bidini is from Toronto, like me, so his trips into the furthest reaches of vintage Blue Jays nostalgia summoned firsthand memories from my youth as well.

Plus there's the small matter of him being in one of favourite bands, that his hockey writing is really quite insightful, that we have mutual friends.... You get the point. I really wanted to like this book.

But it's not my fault that I can't echo all the other critics I've read and say bravo to *Baseballissimo*. I blame Tony Horwitz. I know it's not fair to compare authors, but I happened to pick up Bidini's book right after completing a masterful nonfiction book by Horwitz called *Blue Latitudes: Boldly Going Where Captain Cook Has Gone Before*. In *Blue Latitudes*, Horwitz, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and a former *Wall Street Journal* foreign correspondent, traces Cook's 18th-century voyages of discovery in this, our new millennium. Brilliantly weaving together scenes from Cook's nautical explorations with his own vivid anthropological investigations (usually alongside his trusty Aussie drinking buddy Roger), Horwitz writes beautifully about cultural imperialism, class, science and charisma, coming up with stirring, downright inspiring conclusions about human connectiveness and our ability to interact peacefully even without shared vocabularies.

There's nothing wrong with Bidini's vocabulary in *Baseballissimo*, although some of his turns of phrase sound forced or rushed. The words he uses are generally fine; it's how he uses them that's the problem for me. With a story like this, one that has so many strong elements lined up in a row, the trick is really in the telling. Balancing personal reflections about growing up Italian in Canada with expository writing about his unique experiences with the Nettuno Peones takes an artful sense of transition and comedic timing, an ability to make subtle connections so the scenes flow and the jokes fly.

Instead, Bidini hits us over the head with a baseball bat.

Like I just did.

WHEN BIDINI STARTS his chapter about World War II and how American soldiers brought baseball to Italy, for instance, he clubs us with a one-word paragraph: "War." Later, describing a major military tactical blunder, Bidini writes that General John Lucas "could have sent his men marching on Rome. He didn't. Four months later, thousands of men were dead" (with the last sentence another stand-alone paragraph). This is incredibly powerful materi-

al—spare us the melodrama.

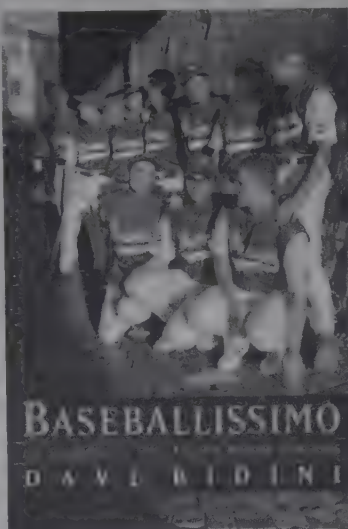
That said, there's much that I did like about *Baseballissimo*. Bidini

about a crowded train trip with his infant daughter and a seated old woman insisting that a standing dad hand the stranger his child, who promptly falls asleep on the *nonna's* bosom. And while I did appreciate much of the actual baseball writing, the minutiae of a minor league team's activities on the field aren't all that riveting, and Bidini's habit of referring to a large cast of players only by their nicknames (Solid Gold, the Emperor) is very confusing, especially after the rapid-fire introduction he supplies at the start of the book. His habit of dropping Italian words and phrases into the narrative without translation is similarly distracting; both techniques provide colour, but if you're not really sure who's talking (or what they're saying) your attention tends to wander.

Perhaps this book was rushed off to the printer, or maybe Bidini's editor was lazy. It's a good story, and there are artful flourishes, but like a suicide squeeze bunt, you need perfect execution to pull it off. ●

BASEBALLISSIMO: MY SUMMER IN THE ITALIAN MINOR LEAGUES

By Dave Bidini • McClelland and Stewart • 160 pp. • \$36.99



lived in Nettuno for a few months with his wife and children and tells us how much he enjoyed leaning out his apartment window and talking with people down in streets below. There's also a nice passage

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CUL-IMA

9914-89 Ave. • 437-5588

A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories like day dishes (culoina is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeines, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hotpot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at culoina means a mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange ginger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large, browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 04/01/04)

DARIEN'S COCKTAILS AND FINE FOODS

5552 Calgary Trail South (Plaza 55) • 439-8675

Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they con-

sist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiver. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, whereupon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drummie. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 03/04/04)

LOS ANDES RESTAURANT

3903-99 St. • 435-6202

It's hard to imagine that a tiny joint tucked away in a southside industrial neighbourhood off 99 Street would have the abundance of charm this modest establishment does. Flags of Chile hang from the high ceiling and one entire wall is covered with a landscape mural depicting the very mountains that give the

place its name. A carnivorous theme is evident on the menu from the lunch special (beef and rice for just \$5.95) right through to the sopa del dia (soup of the day), also beef. I give strong consideration to the hamburguesa de pollo (a chicken burger) but in the end, I happily decide on the lomito (\$4.50), a sandwich of thinly sliced pork with avocado. I also want the Los Andes salad and I'm pleased to find from my host that I can get some on the side for a mere two dollars. The salad comes first. It's a simple mix of Romaine, tomato slices and a vinaigrette topped with some chopped cilantro but the lettuce is crisp and the dressing is clean and bold enough to almost wake me up from my trance as I read a mag. The sandwich follows shortly thereafter and my first bite confirms the wisdom of my decision. There's a healthy amount of both white and darker pork in it but it's the avocado and fresh bread that make the meal. It's warm and rich, with the items all melding together as it passes over the palate. The bun itself is crunchy, light and unlike anything I've had around here. "Do you make the bread?" I ask the motherly figure doing the serving. She nods. It may seem like an innocuous touch but I just love the fact that they've made a great sandwich even better by making the bread themselves. I mean, it's a helluva lot more representative of the culture than going to Safeway and picking up a few bags of kaisers, right? As I mop up every last crumb and piece of lettuce, my thoughts go to servicing my sweet tooth. Los Andes has three choices (at lunch, anyway): flan, ice cream with strawberry topping and the torta mil hojas. "How's the torta?" The lady in charge simply kisses her fingers to indicate the quality. Surprise, surprise, I'm sold. The large slice of cake (only three bucks, if you can believe it) features numerous flaky layers of pastry all held together by what initially resembles a peanut butter mixture but is actually some type of ultra-sweet caramel. It's absolutely delicious. I live by the motto that nothing is too sweet, though this comes close. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 05/06/04)



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OVERTIME SOUTH

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I've been to the downtown Overtime in the past, but this version, once home to a Scruffy Murphy's, is definitely different. Sure, the numerous TVs and comfy little alcoves to relax in with friends are the same, and the Kevin Lowe paraphernalia is visible as a framed Team Canada jersey belonging to the Oil GM and part owner hangs at the bar. But other than the mini-humidor, the swank-o-meter hardly registers. No, this is a more proletarian crowd—couples, dudes in ballcaps and beer. Another thing that's different is the food. I recall a relatively in-depth, upscale bar-food menu at the downtown digs but Overtime South... Well, I'm pretty sure it's the old Scruffy's menu. There's your typical roadhouse fare of finger foods and sandwiches, with a Guinness pie and all-day Irish breakfast thrown in for good measure. I'm somewhat tempted by the latter, which has eggs, sausages, blood pudding, Irish soda bread and tomatoes, but I bail. The waitress lets us know that wings and mussels are on special and we end up trying some of each. We get a pound of medium wings, on for just \$3.50. "I like the sauce," Kate says of the plump wings. "It's buttery. And I like the mussels too." I agree. The wings actually have a good amount of meat on them, unlike many places that serve disgraceful, bony little things for their specials. Nothing at all wrong with the mussels either, as the white wine cream concoction has ample flavour and surprisingly, the focaccia is good. Nowhere near the same neighbourhood as my mother's, but light and airy nonetheless. We split the two ample pieces of fish and divvy up the ultra-thin deep-fried potato slices that represent the "chips" half of the equation. I was a little unsure of things when I first walked into Overtime South. It wasn't what I initially envisioned and the menu seemed like a step down from the original location. But you know what? The place is similar to the Oil throughout this courageous stretch drive in March—better than expected. **Average Price: \$-55 (Reviewed 03/25/04)**

SANTA MARIA GORETTI COMMUNITY CENTRE

11050-90 St • 426-5026

I first heard of this decadent "pranzo" (brunch) through local food writers Judy Schultz and Mary Bailey, who included a nice blurb about chef Sergio Re's weekly gathering in The Food Lover's Trail Guide to Alberta. I've been dying to try it ever since. Seven courses—sounds intimidating, right? Not for me. I grew up with these types of meals. We start out with an antipasto plate. Despite the fact that Kate and I sit at a table alone, this initial platter, featuring fresh mortadella, capocollo, salami, cheese and marinated vegetables, is enough to feed a much bigger group. "This plate alone is worth \$15," says Kate, referring to the measly per-person price of the brunch. By the time course number two—a mix of perfectly done calamari and baby shrimp in a rich sauce served over rice—arrives, I notice that the numbers in this gargantuan hall are increasing exponentially. I feel like I've crashed some big Italian wedding. The pasta course is on deck. A member of our service team tells us to flag him down whenever we're ready and

It puts the Laotian in the basket

Boulouang may be hard to find, but its tasty meals are harder to forget

By DAVID DICENZO

I watch with intrigue as a quartet of would-be diners cruises by the front entrance of **Boulouang**. As a friend and I indulge in a few impeccable Laotian/Thai dishes, they walk by again. And again. And then once more, pulling at the handle of the door. I'm able to make eye contact with one member of the group. I make a forward motion with my arm and then mouth the word "push." The foursome finally makes its way inside and offer thanks as they nestle into a reserved table, one of the mere half-dozen in the joint.

I'm hardly surprised at the comical fiasco. Just minutes earlier, Steve and I were talking about how unbelievably tiny this relatively new Chinatown gem was—so tiny you could very easily miss it while walking by.

"It doesn't take much to decorate," Steve says. "One garage sale and you're done."

In fact, the place has much more class and character than a room done up with items bought from pocket change. Small, it certainly is. But the ceiling fan, wrought iron chairs and gold accents offer an air of sophistication, which is all the more welcome given the modest prices on the menu. I also love the personal touches throughout the place. There's a plant at our table and a tray sporting various chili sauces, a candle and a little ceramic teapot that holds toothpicks.

But aside from the delicious food and attention to detail, I think I appreciate the server most of all. He's stoic but friendly and most of all, he's a no-nonsense type of dude. Real economical with the words. As Steve and I peruse the menu, he suggests the yaw-dip rolls as an appetizer.

"Good sauce," he assures us. "Very good."

Done. We give him a thumbs-up and within 10 minutes, he returns with a beautiful plate of four huge rolls stuffed with chicken breast, shrimp, cucumber, mint leaves and vermicelli noodles. The exterior is a semi-transparent rice paper that allows you to see the inner workings of the dish, almost like a see-through skin on a body. Our guy was bang-on about the sauce too. It's a spicy peanut flavour with some obvious sweetness to it and it goes absolutely perfectly with the light, clean-tasting rolls. At \$4.95, it was virtually enough for one person to have as a small meal.

We also order one of the four yums—chicken and shrimp with glass noodles, cilantro, mint, onions, carrots and what turned out to be the same type of tasty peanut sauce—and the *gaeng-kiew-vahn*, a green curry with coconut milk, green and red peppers, mushrooms, sweet basil, Laotian eggplant and beef. I hang on to the menu and tell our

server that maybe we'll get something else later and he simply responds by saying we've ordered enough. Steve tells me that when he overhears a couple of ladies at a nearby table ask about augmenting the spiciness of a particular sauce, his response is, "The sauce is the sauce." I love this guy.

OUR GREEN CURRY ARRIVES with some aromatic rice and we spoon some of each into the small bowls

RESTAURANTS

placed in front of us. The beef is tender and the curry is obviously very rich flavour-wise but its consistency is more like a thick broth, so it penetrates the rice rather than simply topping it. It's incredible. And so is the yum. The generous heap of ingredi-

ents is placed on a green, leaf-shaped plate, making for a stylish presentation. But the quality of the food actually supersedes its aesthetic appeal. Everything seems to be cooked perfectly and the myriad of flavours is complemented well by the crunchy peanuts and the fresh, exotic herbs (in not only the yum, but all the dishes). I thought we were doing a pretty good job on the spread but we appeared to be lacking.

"Too hot?" the man in charge asks, refilling our glasses with ice cold, lemony water for the umpteenth time.

"No, we're just getting full," I respond.

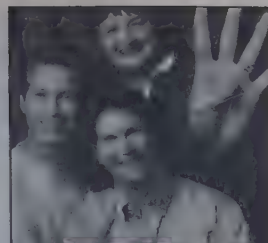
And with that, I feel compelled to have another bowl before we pack up the rest to take home. I think about dessert but opt for the *café nahm yehn* instead, an iced coffee with condensed milk. "Whoa, this is ultra-sweet," I say between slurps from my bendy straw.

The tab comes and it's just like the yaw dip rolls: refreshing. The bill holder is a cool little metal cup with a couple of candies placed inside. And the damage? Just a shade over \$28.

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It's been almost six years to the day that I started a regular gig at Vue and though cougars and vegans will rejoice throughout the River City, it truly saddens me to say that this is my final column for the paper. My heartfelt thanks goes out to all the staff, past and present—especially Ron Garth, who let a punk like me earn a weekly byline. There's no city like Edmonton and I'll sincerely miss it. Eat well, people.



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ZOCCA'S PIZZERIA

10807 Castledowns Road • 473-6339

After a trek to the city's northernmost point (my cell's signal was gone), I walk in Zocca's to find a few old boys putting away some afternoon pitchers. I grab a seat at a small table just a small leap away from the claw machine and the parquet dance floor, which I'm certain is hopping on Saturdays (\$1.99 highballs for Ladies' Night). The specials sign reveals that you can get a \$50 bar tab for your birthday ("ask server for details," it reads) and I get sad when I realize I probably couldn't even drink enough anymore to use the damn thing up. I can eat, however, and I bypass all the baked loaves, pastas and parmigianis on the menu and go straight to the pizzas. They come in either medium or large and aside from the build-your-own options, there are also has a few gourmet specialties: the Zorba (take a guess at the items on that one), the VIP (featuring a strange mix of salami and shrimp) and the Donair. I go for the medium Cajun chicken, which features

red and green peppers, onions, mushrooms, a special Cajun spice and the diced chicken. Like one of the older gents sipping on his draft, I flip through the paper while I patiently wait. After a while, the barkeep/server pops by. "It's coming," she says. "These are thick pizzas." And she puts her two hands about three inches apart to give me an idea of what to expect. She's not kidding—the pie arrives on a stylish old serving tray and it looks more like a big quiche than your typical flat pizza, maybe even thicker than the server had claimed. The dough is moist on the interior but exceptionally crispy on the outside, just the way I like it. And the toppings are loaded on, from the chunky pieces of peppers to the hearty chunks of ultra-tender, spicy chicken. They put a layer of cheese over the top but not just a few loose strands of shredded mozzarella. This is a layer with uniform consistency, like getting the bottom of your car undercoated. It's a crust in itself and this pizza is one that most definitely requires utensils. The thought of sampling some three-for-one takeout crud after trying this gem just horrifies me. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 04/15/04)

moments after we give the nod; he returns with a big bowl of meat tortellini in a simple tomato sauce. I give mine a good dose of grated parm and a few shots of pepper but after a small second helping, even I am starting to lose the battle against my stomach. We figure a wine break is in order. I walk outside of the room to the hallway bar and buy a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon for a mere \$15. Sure, it's only noon on Sunday and I have soccer practice in two hours, but some deals simply can't be passed up. Three courses arrive all at once: roast beef and gravy, a fish dish (with accompanying potatoes and mixed vegetables) and a bowl of salad featuring greens, sliced tomatoes and shredded carrots tossed in a simple vinaigrette. The broiled sole fillets are tasty, especially with a splash of lemon. Finally, there's just one course remaining. Our guy tells us that chocolate cake is the dessert this Sunday. Instinctively, I tell him that one slice will be fine to split and the kid makes me proud by suggesting that he'll

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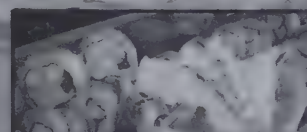
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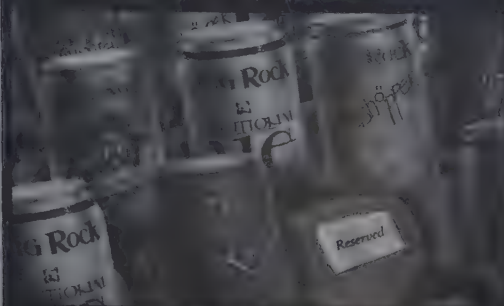
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VUE WEEKLY



Tease and desist

Innovative Alberta anti-bullying program spreads around the world

By KRISTINE OWRAM

It may seem like a bizarre leap of faith to leave behind a career in speech pathology to manage an international anti-bullying program, but for Marilyn Langevin, it was a move she had to make.

"I was working with children who stutter," says Langevin, clinical director of the Institute for Stuttering Treatment and Research at the University of Alberta, "and there was one particular moment where I discovered that a little boy was being teased quite badly—we could almost say mercilessly. We'd been experiencing situations like this for some time, and finally I just decided that we had to do something."

That will to do something quickly turned into five years of work and a six-unit program called *Teasing and Bullying: Unacceptable Behaviour*, or "TAB" to the children and teachers who use it. Aimed at children in grades four to six, TAB was originally

developed for use in Alberta public schools, but has since spread to British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario and the United States, thanks in no small part to the support of the Elks and Royal Purple Fund for Children, which provided money to purchase the program and donate it to several schools across the country. "I think it is really important to emphasize that this project has been a good example of people in the community coming together to make a difference," explains Langevin. "We've got speech pathologists, teachers, schools, children, parents and the community all working together on this."

TAB was initially conceived as a project to educate children about stuttering, but Langevin and her colleagues quickly realized that wasn't going to be enough. "I began to do my research," she says, "and realized that if we were going to be effective, we really needed to work with all of the children who are involved in teasing and bullying, and at the same time educate children and teachers about stuttering, and that's exactly what I did. So I married the two goals and developed a very practical educational program that targets awareness about bullying as well as practical strategies for dealing with bullying."

The program deals with every-

thing from "feelings, and telling to get help" (Unit 2) to "building positive relationships and mountains of self-esteem" (Unit 4). The sixth and final unit deals with stuttering and other differences. "The unit on stuttering can also be used as a model to talk about other differences," explains Langevin. "My dream initially was to have several optional units and to work with people who work with children with autism, cerebral palsy, learning disabilities and so on, so that the teacher or the school psychologist would have materials directly related

such as soccer, the computer room or gym class, where they can pick specific ways to show respect for others. Finally, take-home exercises allow children to speak to their parents about bullying, something that can be an otherwise sensitive topic.

"If bullying is happening," Langevin says, "we want it to be a natural thing for the child to come and just talk about it, rather than it being an emotionally loaded thing that's scary or shameful for them to do. So that gets at the core idea of them having an ongoing, open discussion about sensitive issues, which is hard for many of us, much less children."

EDUCATION

to a particular difference so they could educate other children about it."

TAB also includes an educational video about stuttering and several other elementary school-friendly features, including posters, in-class exercises and assignments to do at home with parents.

Instructional posters include the "Five-Finger I Can Speak Up Strategy," where children are taught how to confront bullies using direct statements like "Marissa, I don't like it when you call me names. Please stop." One fill-in-the-blank exercise allows children to choose a scenario

WHEN LANGEVIN BEGAN her research for TAB back in 1991, she discovered very little had been developed to help children cope with bullying. In the last few years, however, there has been an exponential growth of research in the field, which may explain the huge success the TAB program encountered when it was field-tested in 1996, introduced into Alberta public schools in 2000 and spread throughout North America in the years afterward. "When I was first doing this," Langevin says, "I think I was just so focused on the mission to get some good materials together that I had no

idea it would be as important as it is today. Writing is a painful process. There were days when I was up until four in the morning working on this, and sometimes those days would end in tears. So I'm absolutely thrilled at TAB's success."

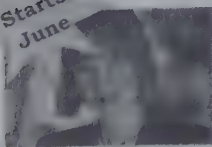
Langevin and her colleagues have received plenty of positive feedback for their work on TAB from teachers, parents and children. "In the field testing, every child gave me their feedback on their experience being involved in this program," Langevin says. "I had responses like 'It helped me to share my feelings,' because it provides an opportunity for them to be open. Some of the children said, 'It helped me to stop bullying.' And this was a really poignant one: 'I'm glad adults are doing something about it.'"

Ultimately, Langevin believes it will take a shift in societal attitudes for bullying to become a thing of the past. "Society condones bullying behaviours, which certainly perpetuates it," she explained. "We see it all around us. We see it in sports, we see it in politics, we see it in workplaces, and it's going to take a number of years to really change attitudes.... I'd said to myself in the end that if this helps even one child, it's been worth it. But it's been helping a lot—and really, who could ask for more in their career?" ●

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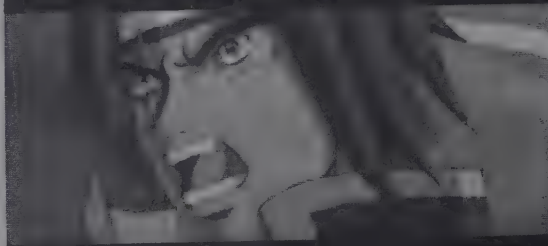
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That internal Rocket

It may be only a matter of time before Hot Little Rocket's roar hits the mainstream

By JERED STUFFCO

In a 2001 interview with the *Calgary Sun*, Hot Little Rocket's Mark Macarthur was quoted as saying, "There's no hope in hell of us ever

quitting our day jobs—there's a small amount of people that are ever going to like our stuff because it's fairly abrasive."

A few years down the line, though, things are looking markedly different. Macarthur and his bandmates may still hold down day gigs, but "abrasive"-sounding indie rock seems to be on the verge of a massive mainstream breakthrough headed up by bands like Modest Mouse, whose latest album made a splash debut inside the Top 20 on the *Billboard* album charts last month. "I'm starting to see it, for

sure," agrees Macarthur. "Since 2001, there's been a few bands that have started to really make it into the mainstream audience. Modest Mouse is the classic example. There are a lot of

other new bands, like Franz Ferdinand, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and the Killers that are getting mainstream approval too. I think the environment has really changed."

If anyone should know what's

hot with the kids right now, it's Macarthur. Along with keeping the low end locked down in Hot Little Rocket, Macarthur earns a paycheck as program director at MTV Canada. In other words, he's the guy who decides which videos get played and which ones end up in the recycle bin. "They're two completely different worlds, though," says the bassist. "Most of the stuff I see coming into the station is major-label releases, so my indie rock life doesn't really interfere with my day job."

Nevertheless, Macarthur has watched his own band's stock rise significantly over the past few years. After meeting back in 1998 through a "musicians wanted" ad singer Andrew Wedderburn placed in a local music rag, HLR released their debut EP *Laika* independently in 2000. The band's proper debut, the LP *Danish Documentary*, followed a year later on Winnipeg's Endearing Records and created a nationwide buzz propelled in part by several cross Canadian tours and a 20-minute MuchMusic spotlight. Last September, the quartet unleashed *Our Work and Why We Do It*, which continues their exploration of guitar-driven indie rock, a sound highlighted by singer Andrew Wedderburn's off-kilter vocal delivery, Aaron Smelski's white-hot guitar slinging and the pummeling rhythms of Macarthur and drummer Joel Nye.

HOWEVER, as some indie trainspotters will duly note, the album was not released on Endearing. "They're definitely the hardest-working company in the Canadian music industry," says

Macarthur of the band's former label. "There such great people that I can't say enough good things about them—they're always working for their bands and we still have a really good relationship with them."

According to Macarthur, the decision to do it without Endearing came down to timing. "It was due to us being impatient, basically," he concedes. "We had our album finished, and as a band we wanted to get it out because it had been so long since we'd had anything new. But the label wanted to wait because they had a few other things to put out. I think we're the first band in history to leave a record label and still be on really good terms with them."

Enter Calgary-based recording collective Catch and Release, who stepped in to help the Rockets with technical issues like distribution and promotion. "If you look at Catch and Release's track record, it's pretty awesome," Macarthur says.

So, with a hot little record and a cross-Canada tour on their plates, can we expect to catch a Hot Little Rocket video on MTV Canada anytime soon? Not likely, says Macarthur. "Well, besides being a complete conflict of interest, we don't even have a video," he says. "Making a video is so expensive, and if you're going to spend \$30,000 on making one that's only going to get played a couple of times, I'd rather buy a van and tour or spend that money in the studio." ☐

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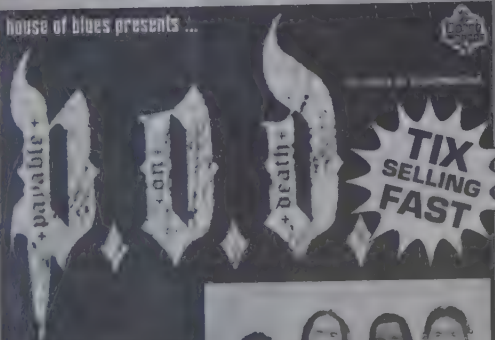
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MUSIC



music notes

BY PHIL DUPERRON
AND JERED STUFFCO

Aussie galore

Powderfinger • With the Marble Index • Starlite Room • Thu, May 27 You can't even finish the question before Jon Coghill laughs. "The Tragically Hip?" the Powderfinger drummer says over the phone from a stop in London, Ontario. "Yeah, we've heard that comparison before."

Although the two bands sound nothing alike, they do have the same

mythic hold on their audiences. In their native Australia, Powderfinger is probably the most popular act in the land, selling millions of records with music that seems to tap into the very core of the national identity. "I think our music is relevant to what Australian people think about," Coghill explains. "It's hard to be relevant locally and be relevant globally, as well. But it's hard for us to not be honest about how we think and feel."

The band's new record, *Vulture Street* (named for the location in Brisbane where they wrote many of the songs), might help them achieve what the Hip have failed to do—i.e., score a hit outside their home country. Its sound is a return to the band's rocking past, which they set aside on their more experimental previous disc, *Odyssey Number Five*. "We just sat down after the last record and said, 'We really want to rock 'n' roll,'" Coghill explains. "We had thought that we had written some really beautiful songs, but we were hankering to really play some

rock. We love playing live, and we wanted something that had some of that energy, something the audience could get into a little bit more."

The band enjoys touring, and places like Canada and Europe have offered up enthusiastic crowds. America, however, doesn't play a big part in their plans. "We like [Canada] more than America, yeah," Coghill responds. "The people are pretty friendly over here. There's a lot of countries we go to and you meet a lot of friendly people, but Canada is pretty cool." —DAVE JOHNSTON

Whatever floats your Böt

Bötterhouse • With guests • Victory Lounge • Fri, May 28 What do you get when you mix one rock 'n' roll legend, three sailors, 20 bottles of tequila and throw them all into a Tijuana saloon? The quick answer: über-rock group Bötterhouse.

According to bassist Dimitri Shirov,

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The James T. Kirks • **Sidetrack Cafe** •
Sat, May 20 • reVUE Being far away from the ocean, we occasionally need a reminder of its soothing waves to blast away our primal desires. Thank July the James T. Kirks decided to throw a big Hawaiian birthday bash last week, complete with fish-oh-nads and fresh wacky take on surf music. The eight or guitarists Ted Wright in a grass skirt may have alarmed me for life, but the girls in bikinis swishing and swaying on the dance floor amidst white up for a that is, well, we'd met the drunken, hairy-chested guy arrested in birthday cake. The Kirks played a short, beer-soaked set before retreating to the safety of the green room. They don't play encores—or perhaps they just haven't learned that many songs in 10 years. (PD)



he found himself killing time in seedy Mexican bars and making ends meet by betting on cockfights following a dishonourable discharge from the Russian navy. Along the way, he met up with two other shady sailors named Salty "Fuckin' Dogg and Jimmy "Scales" Blackmore; one night, the trio was trashing the shit out of a local bar when legendary vocalist Dave Hunter stumbled in. He'd virtually disappeared from the public eye since disbanding his late-'80s rock group, the Hunters, in a haze of cocaine and prescription painkillers.

Apparently awestruck by the trio's debauchery, Hunter asked them if they'd be interested in forming a new band, one that would bring the "cock back into the rock." Things got off to a rocky start. "We were ready to knock the little fucker's dick into the ground," coughs Shirow almost unintelligibly, "but before we could do it, he let out a yell that shook us to the core."

Suitably impressed with Hunter's vocal prowess, Shirow and his bandmates agreed to join Hunter in Los Angeles to begin work on a new Bötörhead record and gear up for a forthcoming world tour. Lucky for Edmontonians, the band chose Edmonton as the site of their live debut. "We were originally scheduled to play at Rexall Place," says Shirow, sounding a little drowsy, "but Dave moved it at the last minute because he wanted an intimate show for our true fans in Edmonton." (JS)

Field notes

Field Day • With Burn the 8 Track • Seedy's • Sun, May 30 After a lengthy hiatus, Calgary's Field Day is back in action with a new batch of tour dates, a new guitarist and a new outlook on what it means to be in a band. It all started when the band's old friends in Winnipeg's Burn the 8 Track asked them to sign on for a western Canadian tour. "Burn the 8 Track has members from the band Guy Smiley, who we've done a lot of touring with over the past 10 years," says Hiebert. "They called us up and asked us if we wanted to head out on the road with them, and we were looking to get rolling again, so we agreed."

Although it's only an eight-date affair through British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, the tour is nevertheless a chance for the band to kickstart a comeback and get prepped for an EP which Hiebert hopes to have out later

this year. Along with the new EP, the band also plans to reissue their back catalogue, including the prairie punk classics *Friction* and *Big Wheelz*. "One of our biggest issues is motivation," concedes the 39-year-old Hiebert. "As you get older, I think a lot of your motivation disappears, but I'd rather not let that interfere with this part of my life. We still get a kick out of playing together, so why shouldn't we do it?"

With the addition of a second guitarist in Paul Gerber, though, finding the motivation to rock on has hardly been an issue. "We'd been planning on getting a second guitarist for a long time," Hiebert says, "and we just clicked with Paul—having him in the band has really kept it fresh for all of us. I don't really want to say this, but the clock is ticking too. I don't want to have any regrets, like 'Oh, I wish we'd toured more and done another record.' I don't like the idea of having any what ifs." (JS)

point/counterpoint

pointzeroeight • With BoBa, Some Won Spit and From Her to Eternity • Stars (upstairs) • Sat, May 29 It's about time somebody started organizing shows with Calgary and Edmonton bands on the bill and taking it to both cities. This one is the brainchild of dsolINDUSTRIES & SM Promotions, and Calgary's pointzeroeight is excited to get in on the action. Guitarist Toby Schultz says serious cross-promotion between the Alberta rivals can only be a good thing.

"Things in Calgary are actually starting to come along nicely lately," says Schultz. "I don't know if it's the era of George W. Bush and everyone's angry again or what, but there's all these great metal bands and punk bands around Calgary, and it's becoming a more friendly scene as well. Everybody seems to be talking to each other a little more these days."

While Calgary has plenty of good bands and venues at the moment, the crowds (like in every other city) tend to be conservative when it comes to spending their entertainment dollars. "Calgary has shown how fickle a city we are," Schultz says, "because we were famous for not supporting our hockey team and our hockey team was going broke. Now they're in the playoffs and everyone's going apeshit over the Flames. It's kinda the same with our metal community—they're

not that great about just going out and supporting the locals until they start getting big."

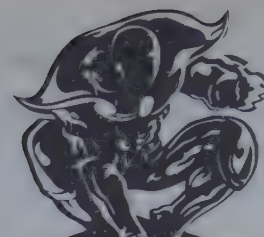
Pointzeroeight (whose name was designed to remind one of the band's five members to avoid drinking and driving) play a fierce mix of metal and punk. "Our whole mission is just to make music we don't find boring," he says. "Essentially we just try to do complicated and weird song arrangements. Keep changing it up. The whole idea is, basically, we were all brought up on MTV and *Sesame Street* and were programmed by our TV sets not to be able to focus on anything for more than 10 seconds." (PD)

Autonomadic for the people

Autonomadic • With the Dirtbags, the Morellos, Inverness and Train to Hawaii • Shark Tank • Sat, May 29 (all-ages, 7pm) While Seattle's Autonomadic prepare for their first tour down the West Coast later this summer, they're starting out in Canada. Drummer Chad Shultz explains that the sheer size of the U.S. and the number of bands trying to conquer it can be problematic—Edmonton bands might drool over the idea of several cities in close proximity, but Autonomadic prefers our sparser prairie landscape. "I've found that where there's a smaller amount of bands, the community is stronger," Shultz says. "I long suspected that about Canada and I was right. When we started going up there I found there's fewer bands that all seem to work together."

Autonomadic's gritty EP *Sterilize the Poor* in *Spirit* harks back to a time when punk was just rock. They pay homage to heroes like Social Distortion and Hüsker Dü, playing simple, meaningful tunes with no bells or whistles. "We didn't really have any kind of plan of how we wanted to sound," Shultz says. "We just ended up spitting out these really short songs."

Beyond playing at home and abroad, Autonomadic have extended their sense of community by welcoming northern bands like the Johnsons and Ten Second Epic with gigs and a place to crash while in Seattle. "It's really hard to make it on your own," he says. "You really have to trade information and when you go somewhere you've never been, it really helps if someone can offer you a place to stay and all that stuff." (PD)



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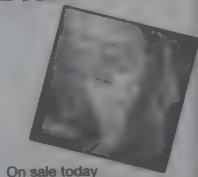
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5. Various – Rock Against Bush (fat)
6. Franz Ferdinand – Franz Ferdinand (domino)
7. The Wailin' Jenny's – 40 Days (jericho beach)
8. Loretta Lynn – Van Lear Rose (interscope)
9. The Beta Band – Heroes To Zeros (emi)
10. Morrissey – You Are The Quarry (sanctuary)
11. Harry Manx – West Eats Meet (dog my cat)
12. Gift Of Gab – 4th Dimensional Rocketships (quannum)
13. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings – Bark (true north)
14. Carolyn Mark – The Pros & Cons Of Collaboration (mint)
15. Los Lobos – The Ride (hollywood)
16. Mae Moore & Lester Quitau – Oh My! (plant & garden)
17. Radiohead – Com Lag (parlophone)
18. Nekromantix – Dead Girls Don't Cry (hellcat)
19. Eric Clapton – Me & Mr. Johnson (reprise)
20. Patty Griffin – Impossible Dream (ato)
21. Sam Philips – A Boot & A Shoe (nonesuch)
22. Eric Bibb, Rory Block & Maria Muldaur – Sisters & Brothers (telarc)
23. The George Bushes – Handsome (riverdale)
24. TV On The Radio – Desperate Youth, Blood Thirsty Babes (touch & go)
25. Living Legends – Creative Differences (legendary)
26. The Pixies – Wave Of Mutilation: The Best Of (4ad)
27. Zeke – The Living End (relapse)
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CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm

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FOUR ROOMS Don Bradshaw's Big Idea

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J AND R BAR AND GRILL Open stage with the Poster Boys (blues/roots); 8:30pm-12:30am

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RATTLESHAKE SALOON DJ Butler

RENDZEVOUS Metal Night: with DJ McNasty

THE ROOST Rotating shows: Ladonna's Review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

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YOUR APARTMENT Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk, '60s pop with DJs Trayv and Alex Zwoil

FRI LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: At Arms Length & Methodical Breed, Main Room: Time is the enemy, Mervin Alvin & Star Lit Sky

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Northwest Passage

BLUES ON WHYTE Donald Ray Johnson

CAPTOL HILL PUB Rusty Reed

CASINO (EDMONTON) Robin Kelly (Elvis Tribute)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Rule of Nines (pop/rock)

CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm

DURE OF ARGYLE Richard Blake; no cover

DUSTERS PUB River City Riot; 9:30pm

EXPRESSIOE CAFE Open stage hosted by Craig Shaler; 4-11pm

FOUR ROOMS Don Berner

HONEST MURR'S Mr. Lucky (blues/roots); 9pm-1am; no cover

J.J.'S The Pre-Historics (rock)

JEFFREY'S CAFE AND WINE BAR Helen Nolan and Jim Tipper (jazz standards); 7:30pm; \$5

KINGSNIGHT PUB Sift

LEGENDS PUB Wayne Alchin

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MICHAEL'S PUB Patrick

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Py Jam Jam Jam

PEPPERS 194

RATTLESHAKE SALOON DJ Butler

Lund

REDS Reframed (CD release and guests); \$5

RENDZEVOUS Headspace and guests; \$5

SIDETRACK CAFE Hot Little Rocket, Lucifer, Selden, Champion Alberta; 9pm; \$8

URBAN LOUNGE Mourning Wood; \$5

WOODCROFT COMMUNITY HALL Open stage presented by the Uptown Folk Club; 7pm (sign-up); 7:30pm (music); free (member)/\$3 (non-member); tickets available at door

YARDBIRD SUITE Marc Beaudin Sextet; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$5 (member)/\$9 (guest)

CLASSICAL

FRI MAY 28 CLASSICAL

ALL SAINTS' ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL An Evening of Baroque Music: Pro Coro Canada featuring Sonya Eagles and Catherine Kubash (sopranos), Wendy Grannestad (alto), Jeremy Spurgeon (organ and harpsichord), Bill Gurner (Baroque flute); 7:30pm, admission by donation (\$10); 420-1247

WINSPEAR CENTRE All-Wagner Evening: The Masters Series presented by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra featuring Nadine Secunde (soprano); Franz Paul Decker (conductor); Richard Eaton Singers, the Cantion Chamber Choir, Nadine Secunde (soprano); Paul Frey (tenor); 8pm; tickets start at \$20, student/senior discounts available

Y AFTERHOURS House/breakbeat with Tipwiggly, Sureshock, MC Flopro, LP, Juicy, Dragon, Old Bitch

YOUR APARTMENT House with DJ Tomek

DJS

THE ARMOURY Top 40/dance

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Big Mouth Entertainment

BOOTS Retro Disco: retro dance

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Arrowchaser

CAFE SELECT DJs Slacks and Tryptomene

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Urban with Invincebale, Q.B. and guests

COWBOYS Ladies Night; top 40

CRISTAL TRAP AND GILL Northwest Passage

BLACK DOG Hair of the Dog; 4-6pm

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Open Stage; 3-9:30pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Donald Ray Johnson

BUDD'S NIGHTCLUB Open stage; 7:30-11:30pm

CASINO (EDMONTON) Robin Kelly (Elvis Tribute)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Rule of Nines (pop/rock)

DRIB Harpold Brown; 3-7pm

DURE OF ARGYLE Richard Blake; no cover

DUSTERS PUB River City Riot; 9:30pm

FOUR ROOMS Don Berner

J.J.'S The Pre-Historics (rock)

KINGSNIGHT PUB Sift

LEGENDS PUB Wayne Alchin

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MEGATUNES Selden; 2pm

MICHAEL'S PUB Patrick

GUILTY MARTINI DJ Jeff

HALO Mod Club: Indie rock, new wave, '60s soul, Brit pop with DJs Blue Jay and Travy D

IRON HORSE Urban Dance Party with DJ Loose Cannon

THE JOINT Fresh Fridays: Urban by Urban Metropolis Sound Crew

MANHATTAN CLUB R&B Fridays: hip hop/R&B with DJ Mad Nose

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL DJ Shawn Z

ORLANDO'S II PUB AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hill; 9pm

RATTLESHAKE SALOON DJ Butler

THE ROOST Upstairs: Euro Blitz: best new European music with DJ Outwack, DJ Jazzy and male stripper; Downtown: female stripper; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Babylon Fridays: retro/R&B/dance with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Electronica with DJs Bryant, Chris

THE STANDARD Triple X Fridays: top 40/dance

STARS NIGHTCLUB Live music: night with Brian

STRENGTH PUB Alternative, house, hip hop, top 40 with DJ Rage and DJ Weezy; 9pm

SUGARBOWL Listen: ambient/DJ/electronica by Ariel and Rod

Y AFTERHOURS House/breakbeat with Tipwiggly, Sureshock, MC Flopro, LP, Juicy, Dragon, Old Bitch

YOUR APARTMENT House with DJ Tomek

SAT LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: Boba, Some Won Spin, Point Zero Eight, from Mer to Eternity, no minors Main Room: Dusty Grooves, Johnny Five, Queen the Eskimo and Villain

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Northwest Passage

BLACK DOG Hair of the Dog; 4-6pm

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Open Stage; 3-9:30pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Donald Ray Johnson

BUDD'S NIGHTCLUB Open stage; 7:30-11:30pm

CASINO (EDMONTON) Robin Kelly (Elvis Tribute)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Rule of Nines (pop/rock)

DRIB Harpold Brown; 3-7pm

DURE OF ARGYLE Richard Blake; no cover

DUSTERS PUB River City Riot; 9:30pm

FOUR ROOMS Don Berner

J.J.'S The Pre-Historics (rock)

KINGSNIGHT PUB Sift

LEGENDS PUB Wayne Alchin

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MEGATUNES Selden; 2pm

MICHAEL'S PUB Patrick

Calmar

O'BRYEN'S Chris Wynters and Scott Peters; 3-6pm;

WYNTERS 101

RENDZEVOUS Deadcast, Silt West Society, Blasphemus

SIDETRACK CAFE Painting Daises, The Almost Leather Band; 9pm; \$10

URBAN LOUNGE Mourning Wood; \$5

YARDBIRD SUITE Han Bennink, Brodie West; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$8 (member)/\$12 (guest)

CLASSICAL

SAT MAY 29 CLASSICAL

SACRED HEART CHURCH Colour of Spring: Kokopelli, Cras, Edmonton Junior Children's Choir; 7:30pm; tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757

WINSPEAR CENTRE All-Wagner Evening: The Masters Series presented by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra featuring Franz Paul Decker (conductor), Richard Eaton Singers, Cantion Chamber Choir, Nadine Secunde (soprano); Paul Frey (tenor); 8pm; tickets start at \$20, student/senior discounts available

Y AFTERHOURS House/breakbeat with Tipwiggly, Sureshock, MC Flopro, LP, Juicy, Dragon, Old Bitch

YOUR APARTMENT House with DJ Tomek

DJS

THE ARMOURY Top 40, dance

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Brendan's Sausage Party: obscure indie rock with DJ Bailing

BOOTS Flashback Saturdays: retro dance, house with Derrick

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Animal: dance with DJ Arrowchaser

CRISTAL TRAP AND GILL Northwest Passage

BLACK DOG Hair of the Dog; 4-6pm

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Open Stage; 3-9:30pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Donald Ray Johnson

BUDD'S NIGHTCLUB Open stage; 7:30-11:30pm

CASINO (EDMONTON) Robin Kelly (Elvis Tribute)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Rule of Nines (pop/rock)

DRIB Harpold Brown; 3-7pm

DURE OF ARGYLE Richard Blake; no cover

DUSTERS PUB River City Riot; 9:30pm

FOUR ROOMS Don Berner

J.J.'S The Pre-Historics (rock)

KINGSNIGHT PUB Sift

LEGENDS PUB Wayne Alchin

LIONSHEAD PUB Billy Wiseman

MEGATUNES Selden; 2pm

MICHAEL'S PUB Patrick

punk/alt/pop/dance with Blue Jay and NikoFeelya

ORLANDO'S PUB AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hall; 9pm

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butter

THE ROOST upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy; new music with DJ Dorian and Mike; **Downstairs:** Retro music; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday; dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Deep house with Winston Roberts

STARS NIGHTCLUB Dusty Grooves, Quinn, Villain

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Clay

TONIC AFTER DARK Uncensored Saturday: R&B, hip hop, old school with Urban Metropolis Sound Crew

TWILIGHT AFTERHOURS House/trance with Eric Field, Travis Mateeson, DJ Kibon, Amadeus Ruff, Crunchie, Bia Daddy, STX, Jeff Hillis, Gryffin

Y AFTERHOURS House/trance with Donovan, Juicy, Ryan Wade, Luke Morrison, Darcy Klein, Anthony Donohue

YOUR APARTMENT House: Foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and Rackman Powers

SUN LIVE MUSIC

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Rockers; 9pm-midnight; no cover

BURD PUB AND GRILL The Rusty Reed Band; 7:30-11:30pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE King Mukata (6-piece ska/reggae band)

CBC BROADCAST CENTRE Mo Lelevar and friend (jazz on guitar); part of the Arts District open house; free; 420-1757

CARGO AND JAMES TEA SHOPPE Open stage with Bob Robichaud; 7:30pm

ECCO PUB Open jam session

hosted by Imaginary Friend (blues, roots); 4-8pm

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Wednesday Night Heroes: **ROSEBOWL**, jam with Mike McDonald; 10pm

SIDETRACK CAFE Under the Covers Sundays; Monkeys Uncle; DJ Dueman; 9pm; \$6

STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY Bill Dumar Jazz Trio; part of the Arts District open house; free; 420-1757

CLASSICAL

CAFE SELECT Thomas Mead (lute); 5:30-9pm

CONVOCAATION HALL Ambrosio Concert: Featuring Opera Nuova, part of the Canadian Vocal Arts Festival; 7:30pm; tickets available at TIX on the Square; 420-1757

CONVOCAATION HALL Festival City Winds Music Society; 4pm; \$7; tickets available at the door; 455-8289

JOHN SEBERTY THORNTON CHURCH La chorale Les Chantamis choir; 3pm; \$10 (adult)/children free

ROBERTSON WESLEY UNITED CHURCH Cantillon Chamber Choir; 10:30am-noon; tickets available by phone at 732-1262

SACRED HEART CHURCH Colours of Spring Encore. Presented by Kologipol; featuring the Brailstones; 3pm; \$12 (adult)/\$10 (student/senior)/\$6 (child); tickets available at TIX on the Square; 420-1757, door

WINSPEAR CENTRE Performances on the Davis Pipe organ; part of the Arts District open house; free; 420-1757

WINSPEAR CENTRE Lively Presented by Cantillon Choirs featuring Belle Canto, Lisa Hornung (mezzo-soprano), Jeremy Spurgeon (organ), Nora Burnham (harp), Heather Johnson (conductor); 7pm; tickets available at the Winspear box office

DJS

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Ladies Night: urban with DJ Inevitable

DECADANCE Worship Sundays: mixed with Big Daddy, DTD and guests; 10am-close

HALO House

MANHATTAN CLUB Industry Sundays; top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Atmosphere: funk, rare

groove, hip hop with DJ Cool Curt

THE ROOST Betty Ford Hangover Clinic: Show Beer Bash; every long weekend with DJ Jazzy; \$2

SAVOY French Pop: mixed with Deja DJ

STARS NIGHTCLUB Captain Abdul's Hip Hop Competition: Hosted by Captain Abdul, includes Wey, Fatty Jones, Mama Rapper, Naked Truth, Ozzeza, Jackmode Squad, Flip da Script and more; 8:30pm (door); 9:30pm (show); 445-2323

SUGARBOWL Multipurpose: Eclectic electronic hosted by Prosper and Eli with guests

MON LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE Blue Mondays: jam with Tim Lee and the Revelators

L.B.'S PUB Open stage with Randy Martin; 9pm-2am

LIONSHEAD PUB Todd Reynolds

SIDETRACK CAFE Open stage with Ben Spencer

DJS

DUSTER'S DJ Dan

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Metal Mondays: with DJ S.W.A.G.

O'BRYNE'S Hip Mondays: Industry night with DJ Finnegan, live music

TUE LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHYTE JW Jones Blues Band

DRUID Open stage with Chris Wynters

LEGENDS PUB Open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

LIONSHEAD PUB Todd Reynolds

O'BRYNE'S Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends; 9:30pm

SIDETRACK CAFE The Perpetrators (blues), Los Bastardos (rock); 8pm; \$6

YARDWARD SUITE Tuesday Jam Session: hosted by Guillermo Vaile (drums); 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$1

DJS

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Karaoke and DJ Tues with Run Root Professional Music Productions

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Live with DJ Sean

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Basement Tuesdays: hip hop/R&B/reggae/dancehall with Bomb Squad, DJ Trivincable; 8-3

DECADANCE Too Cool for Tuesdays: Ambient, Trip hop, goa and glitch with Calatea, Bitstream and guests

DUSTER'S DJ "Name a Tune"

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Twisted Trivia: with DJ What-Ford

GAS PUMP Karaoke contest with DJ Gord

THE GLOBE House with John Acquaviva(Can.), David Stone, Luke Morrison

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Resurrection: industrial/EBM/electro/goth with Niki Rofeelya

THE ROOST Hot Butt Contest: with DJ Janny; 8-midnight; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

SEEDY'S Tuesday Nights with DJ Miss Mannered

WED LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: Dusty Grooves, Johnny Five, Quinn the Eskimo and Villain, Main Room: Tuffhouse, Reno & Mr "O"

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Open mic; 8pm

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Gitter Gulch; no cover

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Ladies Night: urban with DJ Inevitable

DECADANCE Worship Sundays: mixed with Big Daddy, DTD and guests; 10am-close

HALO House

MANHATTAN CLUB Industry Sundays; top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE Atmosphere: funk, rare

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday; dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Deep house with Winston Roberts

STARS NIGHTCLUB Dusty Grooves, Quinn, Villain

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Clay

TWILIGHT AFTERHOURS House/trance with Eric Field, Travis Mateeson, DJ Kibon, Amadeus Ruff, Crunchie, Bia Daddy, STX, Jeff Hillis, Gryffin

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LIONSHEAD PUB Todd Reynolds

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday; dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

SIDETRACK Cafe

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THU 27

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FRI 28

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SAT 29

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Our favorite ladies return to rock a Saturday at the Track with very special guests THE ALMOST LEATHER BAND!

SUN 30

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Under the Cover Sundays, w/ DJ DUDEMAN & WILL MINOR.

ALL SHOWS AFTER JUNE 1ST ARE 8PM TO MIDNIGHT

TUE 01

THE PERPETRATORS

The Winnipeg blues stars return with the ex-Rockin' highliners surf sounds of LOS BASTARDOS.

WED 02

HAM

Winnipeg's best math-rock weirdness with Edmonton's math-rock weirdos FIRST AID KIT.

THU 03

DESPISTADO

Jade Tree tour with THE STATISTICS and Edmonton's NO HANDS.

FRI 04

PANURGE

Quirky modern folk, with guests GIRL NOBODY, SILL and MIKE CLARK.

JUNE 5TH The Phi Effect, Superseed & Redline Victory

JUNE 9TH Edmonton 2004 Independent Music Expo CD Release Party

MAY 10TH Freeman, Wilfred N & the Grown Men & Eugene Ripper

OPEN STAGE MONDAYS

WITH BEN SPENCER 8:00 PM - NO COVER

2 FOR 1 PIZZA SPECIAL - 5PM TO MIDNIGHT

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VENUE GUIDE

A STARS 1045-82 Ave, 439-1422

ALL SAINTS' ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL 1003-103 St 420-1247

THE ARMOURY 10110-85 Ave, 702-1800

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL 7704-104 St, 432-4611

AZUCAR LATIN NIGHT CLUB 11733-78 St, 479-7400

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 10324-82 Ave, upstairs, 436-4418

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Road, 484-7751

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE 10425-82 Ave, 439-1082

THE BLIND PUB 32 St, Anne St, St. Albert, 418-6332

BLUES ON WHYTE 10329-82 Ave, 439-3058

BOOTS 10242-106 St, 423-5014

BUDDY'S LOUNGE Cranidan Mall, St. Albert, 458-3826

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB 117258 Jasper Ave, 468-6636

CBC BROADCAST CENTRE St Winston Churchill Square, 420-1757

CAFE SELECT 1001-106 St, 428-1628

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB 10815 Brodie Ave, 423-0850

CAPITAL HILL PUB 14203 Stony Plain Rd, 454-3063

CARGO AND JAMES TEA SHOPPE 10634-82 Ave, 433-8152

CASINO (EDMONTON) 7055

CELESTIAL LOUNGE 10336 Jasper Ave, 426-7521

COOK COUNTY SALOON 8010 Gateway Blvd, 432-2665

COWBOYS 10102-180 St, 481-8739

CRISTAL LOUNGE 10336 Jasper Ave, 426-7521

DANTE'S WORLD PUB 170 St, Stony Plain Road, 486-4448

DECADANCE 10018-105 St, 990-1792

DONNA 10177-99 St, 429-3358

DURHAM 11606 Jasper Ave, 434-9928

DURE OF ARCTIC Chateau Edmonton Hotel, 7230 Aggril Rd, 468-6717

THE FOX 10125-109 St, 990-0680

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St, 488-4841

LE GLOBE 14921 Stony Plain Rd, 489-1022

GUILTY MARTINI 10338-81 Ave, 433-7183

HALO 10338 Jasper Ave, 423-1410

HONEST MURDER 8937-82 Ave, 463-6397

HORN HORSE 8101 Gateway Blvd, 436-1907

J.J.'S 13160-118 Ave, 489-7463

J AND B BAR AND GRILL 4003-106 St, 436-4403

JEFFREY'S CAFE AND WINE BAR 9640-142 St, 451-8890

JEXILL AND HYDE 10610-100 Ave, 426-5381

THE JOINT WEM, 486-1103

JUBILEE AUDITORIUM 11455-87 Ave, 420-1757

L.B.'S 111-23 Alvin Dr, St. Albert, 466-9100

LEGENDS 6104-172 St, 481-2786

LIONSHEAD PUB Coast Terrace Inn, 4440 Gateway Blvd, 431-5815

LONGRIDERS 11733-78 St, 479-7400

MANHATTAN CLUB 10345-105 St, 423-7884

MC BRUCE'S UNITED EDENHURM 10205-101 St, 420-1757

MECHER'S PUB AND GRILL 11730 Jasper Ave, 482-4767

MEGATONES 10355 Whyte Ave, 434-6242

SACRED HEART CHURCH 10025-105 St



street vision

By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

Married to the Mob

Before diamond-encrusted chalices and ear-splitting roll calls defined hip-hop's Dirty South, there were some groups whose music contained some actual, conscious thought. At the forefront of that mid-'90s movement was **Goodie Mob**, a four-man collective that came across as the southern cousin of New York's Native Tongues. Often injecting political and socioeconomic messages into the beats supplied by production team Organized Noise, Goodie Mob quickly became everyone's favourite southern assemblage.



But as Bob Dylan—and, I guess, Exposé—have pointed out, things have changed. With the recent explosion of Georgian and Virginian hip-hop groups, discussions about America's legal system and its government overseers are out. Banter about the lineups at nightclubs and perspiring genitalia (which I suppose is a pressing societal issue in itself) are in.

Re-enter Goodie Mob. Five years after their last studio album, the ill-received *World Party*, they've returned with *One Monkey Don't Stop No Show* (due for release on June 29). They're a couple hundred pounds lighter, but the group's still in top form, according to Goodie member T-Mo. "We're speaking to a whole new generation of kids who may not understand where Goodie Mob was in '95," he says over the phone from Atlanta. "We've still got purpose and meaning because we came out true and real from the beginning."

Most of that lost weight comes as a result of Cee-Lo's departure from the group to work on solo projects. While T-Mo admits their former bandmate's presence is missed, he says the

remaining three members have more than picked up the slack. And no, T-Mo insists, the name of their new album isn't a reference to Cee-Lo's departure, but a comment on adversity in general. He says Cee-Lo was even asked to be part of the album, but he declined. "Cee-Lo doesn't appear on our album by choice," T-Mo says. "None of us are on his album either, and that's also by his choice. When I talk to him, there really isn't any animosity between us. He just isn't ready to move forward with coming back to the group right now."

The rest of the lost weight came as the result of a more tragic event. Two years ago, group member Khujo was in a near-fatal car accident that severed half his right leg. Currently prospering with a prosthetic limb, Big Gipp says he's still living life to the fullest. "He's about 205 and stronger than ever," Gipp jokes. "He can still choke a man with one arm." When he's not touring with the group, Khujo now spends a lot of time lecturing at schools about overcoming hardship.

Goodie Mob has also seen a label

shift since *World Party*. T-Mo says switching to Koch Records has made him appreciate the amount of work (and money) it takes to do a full-on marketing and promotion campaign. "We don't have a lot of [money] right now," he says, "but we've got talent, and talent is what holds a record label down—that'll be around way after the label's good and gone." That talent will also be present on a slew of upcoming albums, including solo projects by T-Mo and Big Gipp and a new Lumberjacks project by T-Mo and Khujo entitled *The Jack Method*.

While Goodie Mob's sound is different from what Atlanta is presenting right now, T-Mo says their unique perspective puts them potentially in a niche all their own. "I feel like the album we're giving them right now is going against the grain," he says. "We shed a whole lot of light on life. It's a blessing we wake up every day with good health, and we're not one of those groups who take that for granted. In the end, true music is going to last forever—it's not going to be a fad or a phase." ●

HOT SUMMER GUIDE

OUR BIGGEST ISSUE OF THE YEAR!
SUMMER STARTS **JUNE 17TH**

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Friday June 11

Honest Don's/Fat Wreck Chords Artists

the Real McKenzies

WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES

HALF CUT



MUSIC



bpm

By DAVID STONE

Acquaviva to tell

John Acquaviva • The Globe • Tue, June 1 As a youth, John Acquaviva used to truck across the border from Windsor to Detroit with some pals to take in Motor City's burgeoning techno scene. And when one of your pals is Richie Hawtin and you start up a label like Plus 8 that puts Canada on the international map for techno-hungry clubbers, you could become a megalomaniac.

But Acquaviva has never fallen into the rock star mentality that so many other veteran DJs have succumbed to. "A lot of reporters have asked me what my influences are," he says, "and some people could say they look in the mirror, but I'm influenced by the music I play, which is made by other people. That's what I do. That's what most DJs do. I play other people's music—and get paid well to do it. And the more DJs who realize that, the more that might step down from their high horse."

When Acquaviva started becoming active in the world of dance music, he was the one with all the gear, engineering many of Plus 8's early material. As the recording career of Richie Hawtin took off on an international level, Acquaviva was the one who minded the store. "I was the older one, so somebody had to look after things," he laughs.

There's no envy in his voice, however; Acquaviva has become a favourite spinner among clubbers worldwide who enjoy his eclectic sets, which segue from bumping house to razor-sharp techno. "There's a lot of clubs that think I'm just right," he laughs. "To use an analogy, music is like food—

do you eat just one kind, or do you mix it up? With the explosion of [dance music], people tend to play one thing, and I think that's bad. In art and culture, should you be one-dimensional?"

Acquaviva's busy lifestyle isn't restricted to DJing, however. His practice of logging more than 150 dates a year and playing different types of music made him an early champion of portable digital media, and Acquaviva now leads two companies that are on the cutting edge of DJ technology. One is Beatport.com, a legal download service that allows DJs to purchase the latest tracks from a wide selection of labels. The other is a firm that's a partner behind Final Scratch, a technology Acquaviva helped develop with Hawtin and others that allows DJs to manipulate music stored on a laptop computer through specially encoded records and a junction box that hooks directly into a conventional turntable setup. It's meant that carrying around two huge boxes of records is no longer a part of Acquaviva's travel plans.

"I still buy records and obviously use turntables, but it's all run through Final Scratch," Acquaviva explains. "I play all kinds of parties, and I carry 5,000 records on my Mac, so I get the best of both worlds. I really believe in turntable culture, and when Final Scratch first came out, for people who couldn't quite see past their fingertips it seemed a bit wild. But the world has accepted digital downloads and stuff, and a product like Final Scratch makes a lot of sense."

Beyond the gizmos, though, good music is what keeps Acquaviva going. If you measured out a DJ career in canine terms, he says, his 25 years is a long time to be still loving the job. "I have a really good relationship with the residents at the clubs I play around the world," he says, "and at some big parties I might check out the rock star DJs, but [those guys] aren't as passionate about the music as the residents are. I have more of a relationship with them, because they love buying new music and playing new records, and that's more of what keeps me young. To be honest, when most people get to the top, they get a bit jaded." ●

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MAY 27-JUNE 2, 2004

Heavy metal bad boy Tommy Lee reinvents himself as an electronica act

By YURI WUENSCH

No self-respecting heavy metal mofa would have anything to do with electronic music, right? Synths and soothers seem the very antithesis of big hair and bass guitars. Still, it's exactly that crossover that former Mötley Crüe drummer and perennial bad boy Tommy Lee—recently voted the all-around champion on MuchMoreMusic's "top 20 bad boys in music" poll, beating out the likes of Eminem and Gene Simmons—is seeking to pull off with his new act.

Is this the supreme betrayal of heavy metal? Not so, says Lee. "Any true Mötley Crüe fan would absolutely know that from the very beginning I've always used electronic elements in our act—everything from loops to samples," he says. "I've always been into electronic music. I'm into any style of music that has big-ass drumbeats. How could I not be?"

With an emphasis on the percussion he's famous for, Lee, along with DJ Aero, will blend a variety of elements including drums, decks and other electronic gear into what he calls "a shitload of high-energy big beats, acid house and electroclash."

Granted, Lee recognizes dance music might not be embraced by

diehard metalheads, but he doesn't seem to care. "Those would be the people that are stuck in a time warp," he says. "I've always tried to be ahead of the game or right on top of it."

By the same token, he recognizes the fickleness of the dance music community. While he appreciates how touchy dance enthusiasts get at the prospect of anyone trying to co-opt their scene, he says the best testimony he can provide to his commitment to the new act comes from seeing him doing it live. "I take this very seriously," he says. "I would hope that people who do come out would have an open mind. The people who do get really excited when they see me play the drums

PREVIEW **ELECTRONIC**

and see me happy. I think we've put together some of the best music you're going to hear in a club."

Selling the idea hasn't been that difficult, either. He and Aero made their debut at this past spring's Ultra Music Festival in Miami during the annual Winter Music Conference, an electronic convention that engulfs South Beach in beats from a veritable who's who of the DJ world. Ultrafest was the ultimate crucible, one that he says they passed with flying colours, sharing the stage with the likes of Paul Oakenfold, regularly voted the world's number one DJ, and Dutch DJ Sander Kleinberg.

AS IT HAPPENS, Lee shares the same representation as Oakey and

Sander: Chaotica Music Agency, whose roster of acts runs the gamut from trance, house, techno to drum 'n' bass. Lee says not only does he fit in at Chaotica, but he's been surprisingly easy for the agency to market as well. "As a matter of fact," he says, "I just got off the phone with my agent and it's such a bizarre phenomenon. He can't even begin to tell me how greatly the dance community and promoters are embracing us. He said these guys can't wait to have us."

While busy with the tour, Lee's still keeping busy in the studio not only with electronic elements, but with material more oriented toward his rock roots. "I'm not sure what I'm going to do next," he says. "There are four original electronic pieces that are mine. They might come out on my solo album, but I might just keep them separate."

Also looming is a Mötley Crüe motion picture. "I think it's awesome," Lee says. "We just signed the contract with Paramount and MTV about three weeks ago. There's no casting yet or anything."

But Lee would much rather talk about his forthcoming Edmonton gig. "Bring your high-heeled runners," he promises, "because we're definitely going to be doing some dancing. Maybe some earplugs too, because it's definitely going to be fucking loud." ●

TOMMY LEE

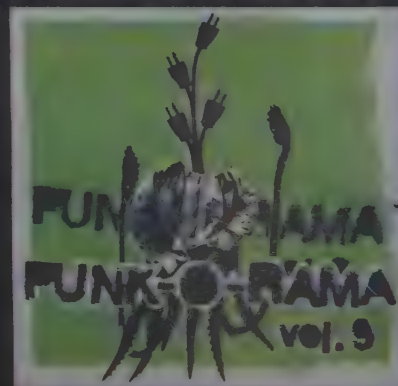
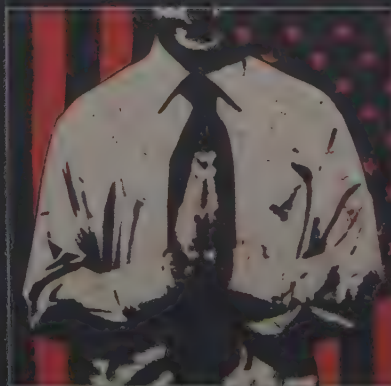
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MUSIC

Pocketful of Miracles

Time is of the essence for London, Ontario's Two Minute Miracles

By PHIL DUPERRON

Andy Magoffin, frontman for London, Ontario's Two Minute Miracles, sounds happy. He's soaking up the pleasant weather on Vancouver Island midway through another cross-Canada tour, although he hasn't been in a rush to get here. His band's latest disc, *Volume III: The Silence of Animals*, came out on Teenage USA late last year but Magoffin figured he'd wait until Mother Nature was in a forgiving mood before he took his thoughtful, quirky pop tunes on the road.

"Now that the good weather is here," he says, "we all feel safe touring in our big, rickety, old yellow pirate ship. It just makes touring that much more pleasurable when the weather's nice."

Magoffin also runs his own recording studio, the House of Miracles, where he's helped turn the musical dreams of bands like the Constantines and the Parkas into reality. In fact, he's been so busy with his

engineering and producing duties he couldn't even justify leaving to promote his own disc until the time was right. "It's been a busy spring recording," he says. "It was pretty frantic there for a while. People hate it when you're in the middle of an album and then you leave for three weeks."

After releasing two critically acclaimed albums, Magoffin knows what to expect from the industry and sounds nonchalant by *The Silence of Animals'* break on the scene. "It already did its token run up the Cana-

PREVIEW ROOTS-ROCK

dian campus charts," he says. "It took a very similar trajectory to the last one." What's different this time out is that tastemaking British DJ John Peel picked *Silence* up for his BBC Radio 1 program and it's found a European distributor. But it's all baby steps, Magoffin adds. "It's doing well," he admits. "I mean, monetarily? No, it's not a source of income by any stretch. But it's spreading a little more far and wide than the last one did."

The Two Minute Miracles' first album, *Volume I*, was a cheaply produced four-track affair, but *The Silence of Animals* shows off a band willing and able to apply some polish to their

music. "A lot of other people spend a lot of time on their art," Magoffin says, "and I think this is an attempt to get at that. There was a bit more forethought to what sort of album it was going to be, where the other albums were sort of tossed-off collections of some pretty ragged material."

"I can look back now on the albums we've done," he continues, "and see a bigger picture of what the band's all about. When I'm not working on a specific album, I'm never too sure what the band is for or what the albums are for. But when I gather all three of them up in my head at once, I can kind of see a picture of what the band is like."

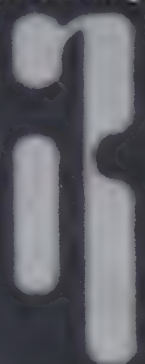
The band's raw, earthy sound borrows liberally from all sorts of genres from roots to rock, but what holds the whole shotgun blast of sound together is Magoffin's radiant, pliable voice. "I'm way more interested in hearing a voice," he says. "When I listen to music, I listen to the voice, because it's the most convenient portal to what's driving the song and what you're hearing. You can interpret a human voice much more quickly than an instrument." ●

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By JENNY FENIAK

Zdan of a thousand faces

Brandy Zdan • With Dave Quanbury • The Sugarbowl • Thu, May 27 "These days I'm really focused on becoming a better guitar player," says Brandy Zdan, who's still just barely in her twenties. "There's a lot of women who play music, who sing songs, who don't necessarily have the guitar chops. That sometimes disappoints me in a way and compared to all the boys we're surrounded with who play guitar. I sort of would like to see a few women dominating in that."

Zdan began singing in choirs at age five and then performing in musicals, followed by classical voice training by the age of nine. But it was still a few years before she picked up a guitar and gladly bid the world of classical music goodbye. "It helped me so much just for the technique and longevity with my voice," she says. "I think people can tell that I'm classically trained and it's definitely helped. I'm very happy I went through all that because it wasn't always fun—that's for sure!"

Her first recording was an EP titled *Live at 280*, which was recorded at a house concert Zdan threw for her birthday a couple years ago. The disc received national attention, charting on college radio and landing her some high-profile gigs.

That summer, Zdan met and fell in love with fellow Winnipeg songwriter Dave Quanbury and the two have been supporting each other's music ever since. Last year, after returning from a six-week tour, Zdan and Quanbury went into the studio with Juno Award-winning engineer Dan Donahue and recorded an eight-song, self-titled EP. Zdan also took a little time to record a few more of her own songs for another EP, which has yet to be mastered and released. "I just wanted to have that as a representation of the new stuff I was doing," she says, "because *Live at 280* is very much kind of a really folksy record. And when I met Dave, things really changed and I started writing blues tunes and lots of like, alt-country tunes."

Zdan also takes the role of lead guitarist on Quanbury's full-length CD *No Vacancy*, which was released last fall.

Perpetrator boy

The Perpetrators • With Los Bastardos • Sidetrack Café • Tue, June 1 Hot on the heels of Fat Possum's Juke Joint Caravan, the Perpetrators are coming to town with their own version of the Delta blues. Winnipeg is a far cry from Mississippi, though, and the three guys are much younger and whiter than their mentors. Still, they bring an energy to the genre that only a new generation could.

Guitarist Jason Nowicki and bass player Ryan Menard met back in Grade 1; by Grade 7, the two were playing covers of their favourite old-school metal songs by bands like Judas Priest and Iron Maiden. Once the genre jumped on the big-hair-and-glamour wagon, the guys turned to good ol' rock music. "We were listening to Zeppelin and AC/DC and Black Sabbath," Nowicki says, "and what we didn't realize was that it's just hyped-up, louder, more distorted blues music." When his older brother took advantage of Nowicki being bedridden with a high fever and played him Johnny Winter's first album, the fledgling rockers discarded all but a couple of AC/DC covers from their repertoire and started the Blues Puppies when they were just 15.

After high school, both guys headed out as hired guns—Nowicki with the "ubiquitous and effervescent" Nigel Mackenzie and Menard

with the Rockin' Highliners in Edmonton. Menard grew tired of the road after a few years and Nowicki just wanted more control over the direction of his music, so in 1999 the two shook off their natural shyness and founded the Perpetrators. The band's first drummer didn't last long, forcing them to go in search of Scott Hills, one of Nigel Mackenzie's pounders. They had no idea where to find him, though; luckily, fate stepped in and united the three at a blues fest in Regina. "It just so happened that [Hills] was moving to Winnipeg," Nowicki explains, "and he had it in his mind to track us down and tell us to get rid of our drummer because he could do a better job."

Last year the Perpetrators finally released their self-titled debut album, which earned them features on CBC and their local television station. They've since recorded a second record.

Folking around

Even after a quarter of a century, the **Edmonton Folk Music Festival** is showing no sign of wear or tear. The beloved summer attraction that invades Gallagher Park and transforms the hill into sacred ground for thousands of music fans is back and better than ever. And still learning new tricks.

This year's talent lineup is among the most diverse on record, with a number of eagerly anticipated performers being confirmed at a press conference last Wednesday at the Edmonton Ski Club, located at the foot of the famed hill. Among the headliners are Ani DiFranco, Earl Scruggs, a re-formed Spirit of the West, Hawksley Workman and the Wolves, Blue Rodeo, Lucky Dube, Rodney Crowell, Natalie Merchant, Michael Franti and Spearhead and Great Big Sea. Closing off the main-stage on Sunday night will be David Byrne and the Tosca Strings.

Local talent is also well-represented

at the festival, with Andrea House, the Swiftys, Cory Danyluk and Sarah Card, Bobby Cameron and Bill Bourne leading the charge. Perennial favourites Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir are also back to delight listeners basking under the Alberta skies.

One big change for this year's event is the relocation of the Park 'n' Ride, which is now situated at Bonnie Doon Mall. With free parking and a cheap three-minute bus trip to the site being promised, it's likely that the change will help loosen up the traffic congestion around the nearby residential neighborhood.

Tickets go on sale June 1, with an adult four-day pass starting at \$109 and increasing up to \$150 as the festival approaches. Individual evening tickets start at \$55, while seniors over 65 years of age and children under 11 years of age will still receive free admission. For more information, visit www.efmf.ab.ca. —DAVE JOHNSTON

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MUSIC



classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

Solo survivors

Just as rock musicians have a following, fans of classical music get excited too about opportunities to hear and see ensemble musicians in solo roles. On Friday night at All Saints Cathedral, Pro Coro Canada's Recital Series offers just such an opportunity. Sopranos Sonya Eagles and Catherine Kubash and alto Wendy Grønnestad will sing *An Evening of Baroque Music* supported on organ and harpsichord by Jeremy Spurgeon and special guest Bill Damur on Baroque flute.

Last Thursday, the ESO's Robbins Lighter Classics Series gave Edmontonians another opportunity to see players close up. Nine principals or assistant principals, along with regular fixture Spurgeon, brought out their party pieces. In fact, it was Spurgeon who led the featured soloists in a playful parade during Julius Fucik's *Entrance of the Gladiators*, yet another new role for the multi-faceted organist and pianist.

Among the soloists was Allene Hack-

leman, who recently replaced David Hoyt as principal French horn. The Vancouver-born musician began studying horn with her father, Martin Hackleman, formerly principal horn for the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Canadian Brass, now a member of Washington, D.C.'s National Symphony Orchestra. Talk about bloodlines! Though she has studied extensively and performed with several symphony orchestras in the States and Canada, this was Hackleman's first solo with the ESO.

Other soloists were concertmaster Martin Riseley, violinists Dianne New and Susan Flock, violists Stefan Jongkind and Evan Verchomin, cellist Colin Ryan, double bass player Jan Urke and flutist Shelley Younge. Not only the soloists were impressive, however. Such players as ESO sessional John McCormick exhibited some particularly sensitive work. David Cooke, the host for the evening, put it well when he said, "We expect team playing and cohesion [from our orchestra] and sometimes forget each one is an artist in own right [and this is] a collection of extraordinarily talented individuals."

A similar thing happens when teachers take the stage. Pianist Alexandra Munn says she was "called to music as some are called to the church"—her girlhood dream of becoming a nun lasted only about six weeks. She's been teaching for 55 years. Every now and then one of her students is destined for a concert career and she enjoys having a part in launching them. Two she's watching are Charles Lin, now studying with Janet Scott-Hoyt at the University of Alberta, and Micolaj

Warszynski, who has just returned from studying in Rotterdam. Warszynski starts his residency at Banff Centre in September. Students who actually make music at their career are relatively rare, says Munn; for others, music is enrichment and offers an approach to life. "They're all my children and part of my life," she adds.

Last Saturday night, Lin and Warszynski were in the privileged group at Munn's after-concert salon. She and violinist Frank Ho had just played a program of 19th- and 20th-century works by Kreisler, Prokofiev, Brahms, Mendelssohn and Dohnanyi. Central to the Convocation Hall program was Ho's unaccompanied *Sonata for Violin* by Prokofiev. Though the audience wasn't large, the space gave added bloom to the robust Prokofiev sound. For her solo, Munn chose five selections from Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*. While the solos were impressive, the most pleasurable experiences were the second (andante) movements in Brahms's *Sonata in A Major* and in Ernst von Dohnanyi's *Ruralia Hungarica*.

While solo concerts offer welcome opportunities to get up close and personal, audiences also enjoy a big orchestra sound, and they'll get that this weekend with the ESO's final Master Series concert of the season. It is, appropriately, Wagner. Principal guest conductor Franz-Paul Decker will conduct the expanded orchestra as well as the Richard Eaton Singers, the Cantillon Chamber Choir and two renowned Wagner specialists in excerpts from three of the composer's greatest works. ☐

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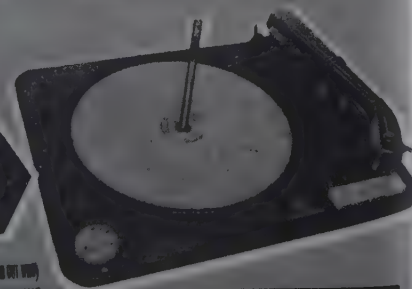
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At the Porcelain altar

At the Drive In offshoot Sparta polishes off a gleaming sophomore disc

By STEVEN SANDOR

Sparta are about to release their second major-label effort, *Porcelain*, and they're set to tour as part of the revamped Lollapalooza festival. But that doesn't mean that the guys in the band still can't get starstruck—bass player Matt Miller admitted that he and his bandmates were a little nervous when they were slated to play Carson Daly's late-night show on the same night famed in-your-face underground comic David Cross was set to appear.

"It turned out it was just like meeting anyone else—he's a pretty normal guy," says Miller. "We were kind of afraid what we might say to him. We are big fans of his, and we often use sayings from his shows, and we were worried that if we said something like that in front of him, we'd look like asses."

It's no surprise that Sparta is a fan of the comedy world's most extreme George Bush-hater. Sparta's own website urges American fans to vote in the upcoming election and features a main-page link to John Kerry's home page.

But politics likely won't be the main topic of conversation amongst Sparta fans when *Porcelain* hits the stores in mid-July. The talk will be about how far the El Paso foursome (Miller, drummer Tony Hajjar, singer/guitarist/keyboard player Jim Ward and guitarist Paul Hinojos) have progressed musically since the release of their acclaimed debut, *Wiretap Scars*. The music has gone in a more progressive direction, with tracks pushing the six- to nine-minute boundaries.

After writing most of the album save one track, "La Circa," at the famous Joshua Tree studio, the band and producer decided to record *Porcelain* as live off the floor as possible, and it gives the record more of a jam-session feel. "Traditionally, the tracks are recorded after the drums are done," Miller says. "But we took a different approach. Mike felt that we were a live band, so that's what we did. We were able to record 14 songs

in 12 days, and that left us four weeks of time in the studio to simply play with what we'd done.... There is more flow in the songs, and we feel it has more of an organic feel."

OF COURSE, the arrival of the new Sparta record will provide even more fodder for the discussion groups and media types who continue to play Sparta off the Mars Volta. Hajjar, Ward and Hinojos were members of At the Drive In, one of the most important American punk acts of the '90s. At the Drive In was put on the shelf in 2001, and the members who didn't go to Sparta formed the Mars Volta, whose atmospheric *De-Loused in the Comatorium* went in a far more prog-rock direction. Of course, At the Drive In fans continue to compare the two bands.

"I think that's something that's totally between the fans and the media," says Miller, who is the sole non-ATDI alumnus in Sparta, even though he's played and been friends with most of his bandmates

for the better part of a decade. "They have to make something out of nothing, save for the fact that there are two bands making music. I think at times it does get a little annoying, it does feel that there is disrespect being shown to the two bands, as if some people are saying that what they do now doesn't matter."

AS FOR the revived-in-2003 Lollapalooza, which the band will embark on after it completes its "rehearsal tour" (shows that, like the Edmonton date, will actually precede the release of *Porcelain*), Miller agrees that the festival resembles the early days of the original Perry Farrell-produced tours of the early '90s, which brought bands from a vast range of musical genres together (unlike its later years, when it became basically a hard rock festival). Sparta will be on a two-day bill that includes Morrissey, Sonic Youth, Modest Mouse, Wilco, the Pixies, the Flaming Lips, Gomez, Le Tigre and Canada's own Broken Social Scene. Toronto is the only Canadian date on the itinerary—the closest show to Edmonton takes place in Seattle from July 14-15.

"I am really interested to see how it is going to work out," Miller says. "There are so many bands, it will be an awfully big bill. And it will be held in a regular amphitheatre, which means seats. I am interested to see how people will flow from stage to stage to see the

different bands, when the paths to each stage will be more difficult to get to. But I am really looking forward to seeing a lot of bands there." ●

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- 1) **SEX & THE CITY:**
6TH SEASON
- 2) **LAST SAMURAI**
(WIDESCREEN)
- 3) **TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE**
- 4) **PAYCHECK**
(WIDESCREEN)
- 5) **MIRACLE**
(WIDESCREEN)
- 6) **WEST WING:**
COMPLETE 2ND SEA
- 7) **SMALLVILLE:**
SEASON 2 (6DVD)
- 8) **WYATT EARP:**
SE (2DVD)
- 9) **ENTER THE DRAGON:**
SE (2DVD)
- 10) **AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAY**

NEW SOUNDS

MORRISSEY
YOU ARE THE QUARRY
(ATTACK/SANCTUARY)

Having never been a big Smiths fan in my youth, Morrissey floated beneath my personal radar until I discovered his first solo record, *Viva Hate*. It threw me into all the Smiths music I missed, and the farther Morrissey drifted from that band, the more I longed for the caustic satire he also seemed to be leaving behind as he repled his tone of indignation with an inconsolable melancholy.

You Are the Quarry marks the return of the scornful Morrissey, backed by the best band he's had since the Smiths and filled with the sharpest barbs he's crafted in a decade. It's a record of disillusionment and contradiction, but his insights are honed by age and distance—now ensconced in Los Angeles because of his distaste for his U.K. homeland, Morrissey begins *Quarry* with "America Is Not the World" (which contains the classic line,

"Well America, you know where you can shove that hamburger"). Nothing escapes his gleefully poisonous tongue on the well-titled *Quarry*: religion ("I Have Forgiven Jesus"), empty art ("The World Is Full of Crashing Bores") and his own heritage ("Irish Blood, English Heart," possibly the most Smith-ish tune on the record, with a rousing chorus and dizzying guitar work from Boz Boorer and Alain Whyte). Yet the best moments come when Morrissey taps back into his dark, brooding side, as on the antagonistic "How Could Anybody Possibly Know How I Feel?" or the heartbreaking "All the Lazy Dykes." In the hands of a master, such loathing can be lethal. ★★★★★ —

DAVE JOHNSTON

SKALPEL
SKALPEL
(NINJA TUNE)

Skalpel embodies so much of what Ninja Tune does right. First, they managed to find two very talented

DJs/producers—Marcin Cichy and Igor Pudlo—who, while popular in their native Poland, were unknown outside their homeland's borders. Secondly, they let them go to town and drop the best parts of hip-hop and electronica and weave it into a crisp, complex and funk-tinged jazz album. Finally, they ensure we get to hear it.

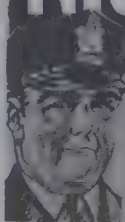
And I thank them for that, because even if you don't appreciate Polish jazz, this album is worth a listen. That's right. Polish jazz. Not something you'd hear every day, but Cichy and Pudlo weave it into an unobtrusive and natural sound that makes you appreciate the years they spent combing record bins filled with semi-illegal samizdat recordings from the Communist era. Skalpel treats their wax right and their cut-and-stitch job draws out lush textures from the jazzy rhythms—take the opening tune, "High," in which a conga is played against the drifting wind section in a flowing river of cool.

While the Politburo may not be around for Polish jazz to threaten any more, the two guys in Skalpel have managed to find a good use for it for the time being. ★★★★★ —JAMES ELFORD

VINNY MILLER
ON THE BLOCK
(4AD/BEGGARS BANQUET)

It's either a healthy sense of humour or an unhealthy sense of desperation that fuels this debut record from the enigmatic Vinny Miller. For starters, the disc took him five years to get around to releasing; what's more, he's portrayed himself on the cover as a tarred-and-feathered figure of contempt. The album begins with a snippet of pirate radio from his native United Kingdom, a scattershot of underground beats and London patter. Lest you think Miller's going to deliver a Basement Jaxx redux, he tosses the prelude and strums a mournful guitar, pleading out the lyrics of "Breaking Out of Your Arms" in the reediest of voices. On

NIGHT WATCH



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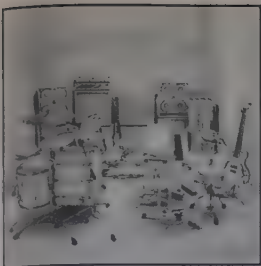
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pedro the lion
pardon my freedom
the end is near
the new year

top 10 sellers

01. stivie yarskyday's new quintet (madib)
02. good news for... modest mouse
03. inches less savvy fav
04. pardon my freedom !!!
05. achilles heel pedro the lion
06. rejoicing in the hands devendra banhart
07. aik lake sonnade hayden
08. s/h no hands
09. the end is near the new year
10. our endless numbered days iron & wine



"Cromagno," Miller layers rhythmic grunting, while "Bogeyearer" finds him gargling out the lyrics. Yes, *gargling*. Then there's the urgent jangle of "Hogbreath Busts a Move," followed by the tense buildup of "Alioth" and the ethereal title track to wrap up the entire surreal journey. On first listen, you'll hate it, but you'll feel compelled to understand it. *On the Block* is an unpredictable, if singular journey through the eclectic musical imagination of a man who is either completely bananas or an unheralded genius. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

SECRET MACHINES
NOW HERE IS HERE
(WARNER)

Yes, there's certainly a lot of hype surrounding Secret Machines—if you read the pages of *NME*, you'd believe they're the best thing to happen to American rock music in years, and they have already become darlings on the MTV set.

But heed the words of the immortal Chuck D: don't believe the hype. The band's new effort is a frustrating record that uses a heck of a lot of studio trickery to disguise the fact that Secret Machines don't have a lot of ideas. The opening track, "First Wave Intact," is a nine-minute opus that comes off as being completely built in the studio; the drums sound as if one single pattern were looped through the ProTools rig and repeated thousands of times (bo-o-o-o-ring!) and the neat little electronic touches can't disguise the fact that it's really nothing

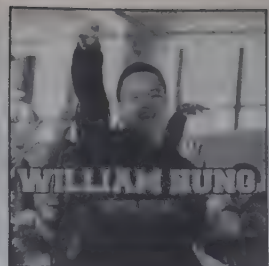


more than a three-chord song. And if there's one thing the Ramones taught us, it's that three-chord songs shouldn't last longer than three minutes.

In fact, the entire album is an exercise in repetitiveness poorly masked by studio trickery. It leaves the listener with a soulless end product that isn't anywhere near electronic music—and nowhere near rock 'n' roll, either. ★ —STEVEN SANDOR

THE ILLUMINATI
THE ILLUMINATI
(UNIVERSAL)

If you're the kind of person who still hails Rush's debut album—you know, the one with the bright pink Rush logo in a bright white flash-burst on the cover—as the greatest moment in rock history, then run out and buy this CD right now. Like Rush in their pre-sword-and-sorcery, pre-Neil Peart period, the Illuminati are a power trio who believe in long guitar jams, solos and songs that connect with working-class buddies like "Working Man" (or Thin Lizzy's "The Boys Are Back in Town"). The Illuminati are an over-the-top homage to mustache rock, and in a world filled with sensitive-guy rockers who deal with their most private issues in the most public of forums, this kind of smoky, jammed-out and fuzzed-out rock made for the sheer purpose of excess is most welcome. And the five live tracks tacked on at the end give you an idea of just how over-the-top the Illuminati's '70s devotion can get. I still remember the reverence with which my older brother Charlie used to treat his vinyl copy of Rush's debut



record. (It's since been passed down to me.) I think I might just have to tell him to get into the Illuminati. ★★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

WILLIAM HUNG
INSPIRATION
(KOCH)

Not having a cable connection or even an antenna for my TV, much of the *American Idol* phenomenon has passed me by. However, I happened to catch William Hung's fateful audition while watching the program with my mom at her house. While Hung's infamous rendition of Ricky Martin's "She Bangs" was hastily dismissed by the judges, especially the caustic Simon Cowell, I immediately turned to my mom and declared that Hung was destined for stardom. It's one "I told you so" I wish hadn't come to be.

Let's set the record straight: William Hung cannot sing. Period. He's positively tone-deaf. Perhaps the worst of the lot on *Inspiration*, his debut album, is his lurching, off-time and downright hard-to-listen-to squeaking of the Eagles' "Hotel California." The triple shot of Elton John covers ranks on reek, too. It's a karaoke catastrophe; *Inspiration* plain sucks—Hung's uplifting follow-your-dream inspirational interludes be damned. Having said that, *Inspiration* is absolutely one of the most important albums to come along in the last decade. It's proof people who don't deserve success get it anyway. Hung's caterwaul is the unwitting anthem of our times... and a sign the apocalypse may already be upon us. ☺ —YURI WUENSCH

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QUICK SPINS BY WHITEY AND TB PLAYER

David Cross
It's Not Funny
(Sub Pop)
Yes, it is.

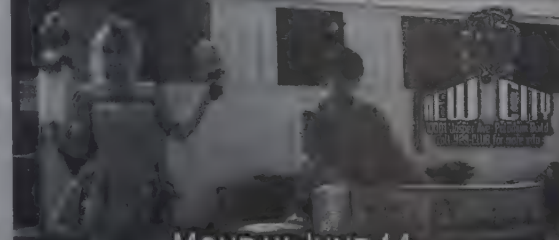
Various Artists
When Cancon Rocked
(Bullseye)
Mox. Klatu. Segarini. Hellfield. Lennex. This is our legacy? Who are these fucking clowns? Is this some kind of Yankee ploy to make Canadians look retarded? This low-rent piece of shit cobbles together live tracks, studio outtakes and unreleased material from some of the most embarrassing bands ever to sully Canada's good name. High(low)lights include a Led Zeppelin tribute band (WTF?) and a bunch of covers of American songs. Special mention for the worst Photoshop cover job ever.

Sophie B. Hawkins
Wilderness
(Trumpet Swan)
Sophie serves up candy-coated poop nuggets. Damn! I wish this disc was over.

Salim Nourallah
Polaroid
(Western Vinyl)
Salim asks "Where were you in 1978?" I was probably sitting in the back seat of our wood-paneled station wagon, heading out to the lake with George Harrison's *All Things Must Pass* playing on the eight-track. Obviously, Nourallah's disc is a tad more contemporary-sounding, but it has the same mellow-yet-driving formula that the quiet Beatle was so fond of. Not too many peaks or valleys; just a nice 45-minute ride across the prairies.

Uncut
Those Who Were Hung Hang Here
(Paperbag)
A steady eighth-note urgency makes this yet another excellent driving album. No lovely cruises through the countryside here though. No, this is the kind of stuff that gets me photo radar tickets. Man, I hate those fucking guys.

INDEED ALONG WITH BEING A WORLD CLASS PERFORMER, MR. QUINTRON IS THE CONTEMPORARY MAD SCIENTIST IDEALIZED. TOILING MANIACALLY WITH CIRCUITRY AND GADGETS IN HIS WORKSHOP, HIS LABORATORY WORK IN THE 9TH WARD OF NEW ORLEANS HAS ESCAPED THE NOTICE OF THE POPULAR ELECTRICAL-ENGINEERING CIRCLES AND HAS ALLOWED HIM THE SOLACE NEEDED TO TAKE HIS WORK IN DIRECTIONS OVERLOOKED BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES. HERE HE TAMPERS WITH HIS ORGANS AND CONSTRUCTS NEW TOYS, EACH MORE DEMENTED AND SPECTACULAR THAN THE LAST. BUT THANKS TO HIS LATEST MARKETING CAMPAIGN, MULTITUDES NOW RECOGNIZE THE POSSIBILITIES INHERENT IN SUCH "QUINTRATIONS" AS THE DRUM BUDDY, A ROTATING OSCILLATOR / DRUM-MACHINE ACTIVATED BY RHYTHMIC LIGHT EXPOSURE PATTERNS. BUILDING AND ADAPTING HIS OWN INSTRUMENTS IS A VERY PRACTICAL SKILL FOR MR. QUINTRON. FOR INSTANCE, COMMERCIAL THEREMIN KITS ARE CURRENTLY BEING SOLD FOR AMOUNTS IN EXCESS OF \$600, ALLOWING "REAL" ROCK 'N' ROLL BANDS SUCH AS DINOSAUR JR. AND BLUES EXPLOSION TO BUILD AND USE THE RECENTLY POPULARIZED INSTRUMENT. ACCORDING TO QUINTRON, A TRANSISTOR THEREMIN THAT YOU CAN RUN THROUGH A TUBE AMPLIFIER CAN BE BUILT FOR APPROXIMATELY \$6 WITH PARTS FROM RADIO SHACK.



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Super Size Me's
Morgan Spurlock
reflects on his
traumatic 30-day
McDonald's diet

By DARREN ZENKO

"For me," says *Super Size Me* director/guinea pig Morgan Spurlock, "the movie is not an attack on McDonald's. They're a symbol of fast food culture, they're an icon of this world we live in, this fast food world."

Okay; maybe Spurlock's using Ronald McDonald as a sort of effigy, a voodoo doll through which to take stabs at the entire culture of high-fat, high-sodium, high-starch, high-sugar, high-caffeine convenience that defines the joyless gobbling that is American Mealtime, but... symbol or not, it's still the Golden Arches that gets all the pins in this documentary journey through the frontiers of poor diet to the bottom of the greasebucket.

Here's how Spurlock does it, and I don't think I'm really giving anything away by outlining his poisonous plan; he's already kind of an urban legend, a mythic figure of consumption like Cool Hand Luke after eating the 50 eggs. He's the guy who, for 30 long days, ate nothing but McDonald's food, breakfast, lunch and dinner. From his first pukings as a healthy young man, his pink and well-nourished innards

unable to tolerate a Super Size sneak attack, to his sitting flab-bellied, hollow-eyed and limp-dicked 20 days later as his team of doctors pleads with him to call the experiment off ("The results from your liver are obscene beyond anything I would have thought possible"), *Super Size Me* chronicles the whole horrorshow.

A stunt? Yeah, sure, of course it's a stunt. It's the exploitative gimmick that'll bring in the gawkers and the rubbernecks (i.e., pretty much everybody) into the theatre, the packaging and framing device for a decent little documentary about fast food culture, an eye-opening primer on the state of the North American quickie diet.

Now mostly recovered from his toxic beef adventure, Spurlock—sort of a twisted inverse of Jared the Giant-Pants Subway Guy—discussed his film, his health and the state of American Food.

Vue Weekly: You had no idea what you were getting into, did you?

Morgan Spurlock: No, I had no idea! [Girlfriend and vegan chef] Alex was kind of the only one. I got the idea on the couch, and I turned to her and said, "I got a great idea," and she said, "You are not going to do that."

VW: You weren't exactly a dedicated McDonald's customer beforehand, were you?

MS: I would eat McDonald's maybe once every month, usually when I'd travel. You know when you're stuck in an airport and you gotta choose between a Cinnabon and a McDonald's, it's really not much of a choice.

VW: I thought so. When you had that first Super-Size meal you seemed genuinely shocked by its gargantuan portions....

MS: Oh yeah! It's huge. For me, I live in New York City, and if I'm going to go out and get a cheeseburger, I'm gonna go out somewhere and get a good cheeseburger. I was just out in Los Angeles and southern California, taking pictures, and I went to my favourite burger place in L.A. I love Tommy Burger—it's this little shack on the corner of Beverly and Rampart in east L.A., where they've been making burgers for, like, the last 58 years, and it's great. These great, meaty burgers, the tomatoes are even thicker than the meat, they put chili and cheese.... It's fantastic. So for me, I'm going to go to a place that makes a really great burger.



VW: What was the worst part of the McDonald's diet: the grease, the sugar... or all the caffeine?

MS: I think it was a combination of all of it. I was so depressed over the course of this diet. I'd never been so depressed in my life. And then, probably the worst of all was the impact it had on my sex life. For my sex life to suddenly fall apart like it did was really difficult.

VW: And how are you doing now?

MS: Everything's back to normal. I pay more attention now to what I eat and how I exercise than I ever have. I finally lost the last four and a half pounds, my weight is

back down to normal. The bigger effect on my body now is I can gain weight quicker and easier than I ever have. I asked my doctor about this and he's like, "Well, you gained all that weight and your body made all these additional fat cells to store all this fat. Now you've lost the weight but the fat cells didn't go away. They're still in your body, wanting to do what fat cells do."

VW: You actually got physically addicted to this diet. As sick as it may sound, do you still jones for McDonald's?

MS: When I smell a Big Mac, my mouth to this day will water, immediately. But I can't eat it. It doesn't even taste like food. It tastes completely manufactured, this fake thing that's flavoured to taste like food. The French fries are smoked plastic to me. If I drink the sodas, like, a fountain Coke, for hours afterward, in my nasal passages, I just breathe this chemical aroma. And if I take a bit of the Big Mac, actually chew it, there's this McFilm in my mouth, this gummy kind of aftertaste.

VW: Lots of *Super Size Me* is frankly frightened. What was your most personally scary moment?

MS: For me, personally, my personal journey, the scariest was Day 21, when all the doctors told me to stop. That was by far the scariest part in the whole movie. Because when you have three doctors telling you 'You should stop because we don't know what's going to happen to you,' that's really scary.

VW: And the scariest cultural moment?

MS: By far, the most disturbing thing in the whole movie is the school lunch program. Because these kids—parents have no clue, parents have no idea what their kids are eating. We are feeding kids garbage in schools, you know? They are going there and setting them up to make mistakes for life in terms of their eating habits, and it's awful. Here's the place where kids, from five to 18, 13 years of their life, they're going to spend a third of that time at school. So, during that time, shouldn't we not only be teaching them in the classroom, but in the lunchroom? Shouldn't they be learning what great food is? And people are like, 'No, no; we should give them choices.' No we shouldn't! We shouldn't be giving a 12-year-old the choice between ice cream and asparagus. We, as adults who care about the kids, need to make the decisions for them. Our priorities are completely out of whack, it's so wrong... and for me, that's where we need to focus our efforts, that's where we need to change.

VW: So, have you changed your business card from "filmmaker" to "fast food activist"?

MS: The thing is, by making this film I've put myself in the position of really having an obligation. You know, doing everything I can to (a) get the film out there and to (b) push some things forward that the film brings up. I want to do everything I can to make sure people see this movie and are able to go out and be able to make a change if they believe

Pictures at an exhibition

Vue's film critics offer their picks and pans of Metro Cinema's Moving Pictures festival

By VUE STAFF

8:17 Darling Street (20h17, Rue darling) • Fri, May 28 (7pm)

G  rard Langlois is an alcoholic, though a recovering one; with AA's help he's been dry for six months. On his way home from fixing his ex-wife's sink he breaks a shoelace, delaying him just enough to miss the 8:17 p.m. explosion that levels his apartment block and kills six people. As a sleazy reporter he'd sought out crime, death, disaster; now it's come home. G  rard's pickled reporter's instincts kick in and he slouches the streets asking questions, trying to find out why he was spared when he'd already wasted so much of his life.

It's very French, 20h17 Rue darling, with lots of ruminating and existential angsting and tugging on a ragged cigarette, narrated observances like "You eat, shit, get laid if you're lucky, and sleep. The next day you start over, then one day, there is no next day." G  rard pokes around and digs up clues, but it's not a whodunit per se; there's no crime to uncover, no bad guys to punish. G  rard just smokes and listens and scoops up pieces of the lives and moments of the people in the building, building portraits of his neighbours. He creates imaginary scenarios for each of the victims living their lives, hoping the mother of a girl who ran out on a parental fight found her and bathed her and read her a story before the white glare of death set in.

20h17 Rue darling sticks a stick in your stomach and stirs. There's something gut-level real and scary about the possibility of losing one's home, the utter, unthinkable jarring dislocation of it, of being cut loose from everything to wonder why you lived when others died, why that little hesitation saved your life. 20h17 Rue darling walks those streets, smokes those cigarettes, thinks those thoughts, drags you with it. —Stephen Notley

On the Corner • Sat, May 29 (7pm)

The "true north, strong and free" has changed its face on film in my lifetime, thank heaven, from the hyper-earnestness of Saskatoon-cheeked tykes and their faithful wolf companions to a range of films that wouldn't be at home on the range. On the Corner is one such entity, a bleak depiction of Vancouver's downtown east side, so wrought with drugs, violence, prostitution, AIDS and other misery that some of its characters look back on the reserve at Prince Rupert they've fled with nostalgia.

Angel (Alex Rice) is a young woman whose plummet into addiction and prostitution changes course the day her little brother Randy

(Simon Baker) shows up at her one-room tenement. He's escaped the drudgery of Prince Rupert, naively believing his sister wants him or has the will to free herself from her prison of poverty and self-destruction. Mixed into their relationship is Angel's best friend, another prostitute, their boyfriends/losers/dealers and quasi-parents hewn from the dying rock of the city, all of whom alternately stabi-



lize or destabilize the sister-brother pair at the centre. On the Corner confronts us, the comfortable viewers, with hideous images of people we might want to ignore, forget or blame for all of their problems, and refuses to let us push the "reject" button.

Director Nathaniel Geary provides no simple portraits; there's no "hooker with a heart of gold" or "street kid with moxie" here; neither are there superficial, contrived or patronizing "Native spirituality" *deus ex machina* solutions. On the Corner is like *Monster*, but without the pyrotechnics. Its minimal style is occasionally too *NYPD Blue* for my taste, but that's a quibble. The film is pain on celluloid. Sometimes the only thing that can wake us up is pain. —MALCOLM AZANIA (MINISTER FAUST)

Stupidity: The Documentary • Sat, May 29 (9pm)

Director Albert Nerenberg's *Stupidity: The Documentary* plays like a cheap-ass trailer for a much longer, much better movie. A 75-minute flurry of movie clips, news footage, TV detritus, staged scenes and sound bites from a random assortment of pundits including Noam Chomsky, Geoff Pevere, Bill Maher and Josey Vogels, *Stupidity* refuses to sit still as it decries what it describes as an epidemic of brainless human behaviour and dumbed-down popular entertainment. But it's not like *Stupidity* is any better: Nerenberg packs the film with images of skateboarders falling down flights of stairs, drunken yahoos vomiting into gutters and breaking bottles over each other's heads and comedy sketches recycled from Nerenberg's own Trailervision website, all chopped together into one long, headache-inducing blur.

Nerenberg never finds a focus for his argument: he'll start talking about the development of standardized intelligence tests, only to go off on an unfunny tangent in which he interviews the citizens of Vineland, New Jersey, the site of the institute that invented the term "moron." A section about the Nazis' belief in the "science" of eugenics gives way to a segment about Salma Hayek growing a monobrow for the film *Frida*. And inevitably,




Rage Against the Darkness

there are lots of stale jokes about George W. Bush. *Stupidity* is a smug, ugly-looking, incoherent screed that made me feel as though I were actually getting dumber as I watched it. —PAUL MATWYCHUK

Rage Against the Darkness • Sun, May 30 (7pm) John Kastner's extraordinarily intimate documentary profiles Bunny and Leona, two aging

SEE PAGE 42



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The 3rd Annual


GLOBAL VISIONS Documentary Series

presents:

FIX: Story of an Addicted City by Nettie Wild

Canada, 2003, 93 minutes

Dean Wilson used to be an IBM salesman. Now he is possibly the most outspoken drug addict in Canada, an advocate for street addicts from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Fix is about a struggle that has ramifications for the social health of the immediate community and those around it.



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



"As a portrait of an urban crisis and its political fallout, Wild's film does a consistently sensitive job of humanizing all players."
—The Toronto Star

"Fix is less about taking sides, or about who is right or wrong, but about exposing the problem for what it is."
—JPMReview

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at 7PM
DIRECTION NATHANIEL
GEARY IN PERSON





STUPIDITY THE
DOCUMENTARY SATURDAY
at 9PM

**RAGE
AGAINST THE
DARKNESS** SUNDAY
at 7PM

**SURREALITY
SHORTS** SUNDAY
at 8:45PM

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AIN'T IT COOL NEWS

SUPER SIZE ME

ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS, ANIMATIONS ZOOGRAPHIC, MOTION GRAPHICS JONAH TOBIAS, EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS J.R. MORLEY AND HEATHER WINTERS, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY MORGAN SPURLOCK

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ODEON FILMS

Glacial discrimination

The Day After Tomorrow gets penalized for icing

BY STEPHEN NOTLEY

Thank you, Roland Emmerich. In these times when America and the world are gripped tight in disasters built entirely by and for human beings, it's good to step back once in a while and appreciate the entirely non-human catastrophes just waiting to clobber us whether we've got our own shit worked out by then or not.

Like, for example, rapid climate change. *The Day After Tomorrow*, of course, takes the whole thing to retarded Hollywood extremes with a huge megastorm that brings down a new Ice Age in three days, but there are folks in the climate community who've done projections of huge shifts that take place in the 10- to 20-year range and the Pentagon took those projections seriously enough to do a study of the strategic implications of a major

change in Earth's climate. (Quick summary: lots of wars, we're all dead.)

So rapid climate change is something to be scared of. Of course, *The Day After Tomorrow* doesn't actually have anything to say about this beyond a vague "we should do something," but that's not its point. Its purpose is to throw stormy horrors at Americans and maybe, a month from now, some of them will have disturbing dreams about being alone in the



snowswept ruins of their town, everything they've ever known blasted away by neverending winter.

As a movie, well, *The Day After Tomorrow* is about what you'd expect from the man who gave us *Independence Day*, *Godzilla* and *The Patriot*. That is, it's a series of special-effects destruction setpieces linked together by a soap opera set of flunky characters runnin' around with no real thematic sense or overall point.

But! If you wanna see Los Angeles

get torn apart by tornadoes, this is your movie. Likewise if your secret cataclysm fantasy is a New York semi-submerged in water or a Tokyo pelted by half-baby-sized hailstones. *The Day After Tomorrow* doesn't quite have a monster, exactly, in the way that *Independence Day* and *Godzilla* did; the closest thing it's got is a twirling continent-sized hurricane with a 50-mile-wide eye that sucks space-cold air down from the upper atmosphere to flash-freeze everything it stares at. Not bad, but y'can't really hate it—and more importantly, you can't defuse it with a computer virus or trap it in the Brooklyn Bridge and kill it with missiles. You just have to wait for it to kinda peter out.

OH, YEAH—THERE ARE some people in this movie too. Dennis Quaid is the Cassandra climatologist whose warnings go unheeded, though of course, given the timeframes involved, there's obviously dick anybody could have done. Sela Ward plays his wife, a doctor trapped in a cancer boy subplot that sucks precious oxygen from the

theatre every flickering moment it appears. Meanwhile Quaid's son is Jake Gyllenhaal of *Donnie Darko*, a nerdy kid who gets stuck with his would-be girlfriend Emmy Rossum (a charming enough fusion of Shannon Elizabeth and Mia Sara) and another nerd in flooded-then-frozen New York. There they "struggle to survive," burning books in the New York Public Library, facing computer-generated wolves and occasionally running from super-ice that—no shit—chases them down the hallway.

The Day After Tomorrow pretty much punts the only truly interesting thing about its doomsday scenario, namely the issue of relocating huge human populations from newly uninhabitable areas to newly less habitable areas that also happen to have huge human populations of their own. Rather than the typical rising sea-level disaster, this apocalypse has a keen sense of geopolitical irony in that it freezes the northern hemisphere solid, forcing the rich to rely on the generosity of the poor. In the film, this translates into a scene showing Amer-

icans illegally crossing the border into Mexico—fancy that!—followed by the apparent relocation of 200 million Americans to a Mexican refugee camp. Wow—thanks for being such a good sport about this, Mexico!

The movie plays with the destruction of America, but like *The Patriot*, it can't really conceive of a world where America doesn't exist. Sure, we see an American flag flap listlessly in the breeze before superfreezing solid, and we see ol' Lady Liberty windblasted with icicles, and yeah, everybody in America is either dead or in Mexico. But *The Day After Tomorrow* dares not blast the audience with real tragedy or bleak hopelessness, so we feel it's just a matter of time before all this snow gets cleared away and get things return to normal. A cop-out, of course, but whaddya expect? This is Roland Emmerich we're talking about here. ●

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

Directed by Roland Emmerich • Written by Roland Emmerich and Jeffrey Nachmanoff

• Starring Dennis Quaid, Ian Holm and Jake Gyllenhaal • Opens Fri, May 28

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Every week in Heresy!, Vue invites its film writers to champion a film that everyone else dismisses as trash, or to slam a film that everyone else regards as art. This week: **Brian Gibson slams KILL BILL.**

Quentin Tarantino's films were embodiments of cool detachment. *Reservoir Dogs* savagely re-envisioned film noir. *Pulp Fiction* had a clever dovetailing story, snappy dialogue and scenes of violence that actually had dramatic power and purpose. *Jackie Brown* even showed Tarantino reaching out to express some humanity and pathos, especially in the figure of Pam Grier's weary, middle-aged stewardess.

Kill Bill, Vol. 1 is nothing but disembodied, cartoon gore-porn. It's stylish and energetic, but it's completely vacuous and mind-numbingly pointless. "So what?" you say. "It's fun entertainment." But there are a gazillion excus-

es out there for finishing a megatub of popcorn in the dark—this is American film maestro Tarantino we're talking about. He should be better than this.

In *KBT*, his cinematic conjuring has just one aim: to show blood in all its furious explosions, expulsions, and spouting redness. Eyes shed hemoglobin tears, an enemy is scalped and a man holds his own cut-off leg within a red sea of wailing victims lying among the driftwood of their limbs. There's enough blood onscreen in this sadistic, hemophilic film to make Sam Peckinpah shudder in his grave.

The live action of *KBT* is so cartoonish, it's barely distinguishable from the anime sequence where O-Ren butchers her parents' killers. What Tarantino really wanted to make was *Itchy and Scratchy: The Movie* without any satire or clever dialogue. "So what?" you say again. "It's all fake." Why, then, have the Bride kill Copperhead in front of her daughter? Why make the rape of the comatose Bride so realistically brutal, complete with a leering white-trash trucker stereotype as the rapist?

Even worse, Tarantino seems to have lost his film sense. The dialogue pretends to be profound, then lapses into insults and expletives. Much of the film is over-scored, and the titled chapter breaks

and location notes are unnecessary. Cat-fights masquerade as female empowerment, and women kick ass only by co-opting patriarchal symbols—in the Bride's case, by using phallic weapons to eviscerate women and men dominated by one man, Bill. In a crude scene that sums up the film's simplistic screw-or-be-screwed notion of feminism, schoolgirl-assassin Go Go Yubari asks an ugly, jag-toothed, grinning Japanese boy if he wants to fuck her. When he says yes, she stabs him in the stomach and asks, "Or is it I who have penetrated you?"

KBT shows little respect for the culture which give birth to kung fu films, often mocking the Japanese as odd and inferior. Former sword craftsman Hanzo (Sonny Chiba) and his assistant are buffoonish tea shop workers. The owner of the restaurant where O-Ren and her posse fight the Bride is a bumbling toady with a shrewish wife.

Unleashed in his celluloid playground by the overindulgent Weinstein parents at Miramax, juvenile Quentin, a.k.a. Puff Adder, sated on comic books, videogames and kung fu movies, has spat out a sickly poisonous, bloody gob of a movie. Devoid of compassion, ambiguity, wit and depth, *Kill Bill*, Vol. 1 is a waste of artistic talent. ●

FILM WEEKLY

NEW THIS WEEK

The Day After Tomorrow (CO, FP, LD) Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal, Ian Holm and Sela Ward star in *Independence Day* director Roland Emmerich's big-budget disaster epic about a crusading paleoclimatologist trying to reunite with his son while saving the world from a new Ice Age.

Fix: The Story of an Addicted City (M) Director Nettie Wild's documentary about the efforts of addicts-rights advocate Dean Wilson and Vancouver mayor Philip Owen to create a more progressive drug policy, including safe injection sites and long-term treatment programs, within their city. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, May 27 (7pm)*

Moving Pictures (M) A collection of recent films (and one classic) by Canadian directors. Featuring: *8:17, Darling Street* (dir: Bernard Émond); *Fri, May 28 (7pm)*; *The Decline of the American Empire* (dir: Denis Arcand); *Fri, May 28 (9pm)*; *On the Corner* (dir: Nathaniel Cary); *Sat, May 29 (7pm)*; *Stupidity: The Documentary* (dir: Albert Nerenberg); *Sat, May 29 (9pm)*; *Rage Against the Darkness* (dir: John Kastner); *Sun, May 30 (7pm)*; *Surreality Shorts* (various directors). *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel*

Raising Helen (CO, FP, LD) Kate Hudson, John Corbett and Joan Cusack star in *Pretty Woman* director Garry Marshall's cutesy comedy about a young modelling agency employee who is forced to put aside her flighty lifestyle when her sister dies and makes her the guardian of her three children.

Soul Plane (CO, FP) Kevin Hart, Tom Arnold, Method Man and Snoop Dogg star in director Jessy Terrero's high-flying comedy about a man who uses the \$600 million he won in a lawsuit against an airline to launch an airline of his own—one tailored especially toward African-American passengers.

Super Size Me (GA) Director Morgan Spurlock eats nothing but McDonald's food for a month and monitors his new diet's devastating effects on his body in this humorous, headline-grabbing documentary about North America's unhealthy love affair with fast food.

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Asa Nu Maan Watna Da (CO) Harbharjan Mann, Kurandeep Kimmi and Gureet Ghuggi star in director Manmohan Singh's Bollywood musical about two young lovers, one raised in India, the other in Canada, and their struggle to overcome their cultural differences.

The Corporation (P) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.

The Delicate Art of Parking (P) Dov Tiefenbach and Fred Ewanick star in director Trent Carlson's low-budget mockumentary about a scofflaw filmmaker who gets drawn into the bizarre subculture of parking enforcement while researching his latest documentary.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman.

Kin Bahl, Vol. 2 (FP) Uma Thurman, David Carradine, Michael Madsen and Daryl Hannah star in the conclusion of writer/director Quentin Tarantino's genre-hopping exploitation epic, in which a former assassin relent-

lessly tracks down the man who employed her, impregnated her, shot her and left her for dead.

Main Hoon Na (FP) Shahrukh Khan, Zayed Khan, Amrita Rao and Naseeruddin Shah star in director Farah Khan's Bollywood musical about a major who must pose as a university student in order to protect the life of an officer's daughter and to fulfill the dying wish of his martyred father. In Hindi.

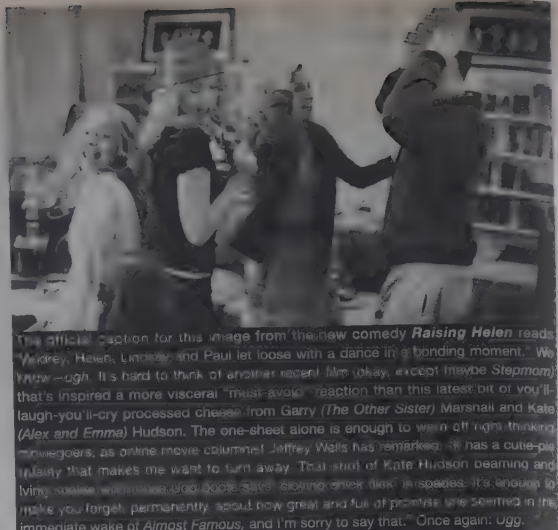
Man on Fire (CO) Denzel Washington, Dakota Fanning and Christopher Walken star in *Top Gun* director Tony Scott's glossy revenge flick about a former U.S. Marine who takes a job as a bodyguard for the daughter of a wealthy family in Mexico City that has been targeted by a gang of kidnappers.

Mean Girls (CO, FP) Lindsay Lohan, Lacey Chabert, Rachel McAdams and Tina Fey (who also wrote the script) star in *Freaky Friday* director Mark S. Waters's anthropological teen comedy about a high school transfer student who finds herself at war with a ruthless clique of snobby popular girls.

New York Minute (FP) Mary-Kate Olsen, Ashley Olsen and Eugene Levy star in *What a Girl Wants* director Dennie Gordon's tween comedy about two twin sisters—one a scholarly "good girl," the other a rebellious "punk rocker"—who have a full day of misadventures when they sneak off together to New York City.

The Saddest Music in the World (CO) Isabella Rossellini, Mark McKinney and Maria de Medeiros star in *Careful* director Guy Maddin's wildly eccentric musical melodrama about a legless Winnipeg beer baroness who sponsors a contest to determine which nation produces the most melancholy music on the planet.

Scooby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (FP) Matthew Lillard, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Linda Cardellini and Freddie Prinze Jr. star in director Raja Gosnell's sequel to his 2002 hit, in which the Mystery, Inc. detective agency battles an evil scientist who has developed a machine that



recreates the greatest foes from their past cases.

Shrek 2 (CO, FP, LD) The voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Antonio Banderas, Julie Andrews and John Cleese are featured in this sequel to the 2001 animated hit, in which grouchy ogre Shrek travels to the homeland of his new wife Fiona, where he gets a chilly reception from her parents and her former beau, Prince Charming.

13 Going on 30 (CO) Jennifer Garner, Mark Ruffalo, Kathy Baker and Judy Greer star in *Tadpole* director Gary Winick's comic fantasy about a gawky 13-year-old girl who wakes up one morning as her gorgeous, successful 30-year-old self as a result of a magical wish.

Touching the Void (P) Joe Simpson, Simon Yates, Nicholas Aaron and Brendan Mackey star in *One Day in September* director Kevin Macdonald's documentary about Yates's astonishing, harrowing struggle to survive a disastrous mountaineering expedition in the Peruvian Andes. Based on the book by Joe Simpson.

Troy (CO, FP, LD) Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Orlando Bloom, Brian Cox and Peter O'Toole star in *Das Boot* director Wolfgang Petersen's CGI-fueled epic retelling of the saga of the Trojan War, from Paris's abduction of Helen of Troy to the Greeks' bloody, decade-long siege of the Troy stronghold.

Van Helsing (CO, FP) Hugh Jackman, Kate Beckinsale and Richard Roxburgh star in *The Mummy* director Stephen Sommers's CGI-filled action/horror blockbuster, in which celebrated 19th-century monster hunter Abraham Van Helsing finds himself battling Count Dracula, the Wolf Man and Frankenstein's monster in a remote Eastern European village.

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they can. So for me, right now, my biggest goal is to get this movie out there, to parents, to educators, to schools, to as many people as I can across as many continents as I can. Because this is not just a U.S. problem anymore; now that our fast food culture has permeated the world and our lifestyles are starting to permeate all four corners of the globe, this film needs to get out there for everyone to see. I believe I have an obligation now to see that happens.

VW: And have you received any response from the Golden Archers themselves?

MS: No. Well, they made an official statement after Sundance where they said, you know, "This film isn't about choice; it's about one filmmaker's irresponsibility..." Typical spin. Anything they could say to take credibility away from the movie. But six weeks after that, they announced they were eliminating Super Size options—"And by the way, it has nothing to do with that film whatsoever." Last week, they announced they're going to launch their "Go Active" adult Happy Meals. When are they going to launch this? May 6. When does the film launch nationwide? May 7. So it's just another incredible, bizarre coincidence that has nothing to do with the movie. Finally, in my opinion, their actions are starting to become somewhat admirable. They're making small steps. More has to happen, but these are very encouraging steps, in my opinion.

VW: But on the other hand, why bother trying to change McDonald's if you can convince people to just not go to McDonald's in the first place?

MS: That's six of one, half-dozen of the other. The thing is, this movie could have happened anywhere. This movie could have happened at a Burger King, this movie could have happened at a Wendy's, at a Taco Bell. I could have gotten just as sick



Super Size Me director Morgan Spurlock

at any fast, casual chain in the country. I could have gone to an Olive Garden, I could have gone to an Outback. We as a culture, we overeat and we underexercise, and that's the core of the movie. I picked McDonald's because they're iconic of our food culture and they influence every other chain. Every other chain emulates their business practices. So, I wanted to pick the one company that could most easily institute change. Everybody else is going to follow suit.

VW: You were inspired to make this movie by stories of kids suing McDonald's over their obesity. How do you feel about that sort of lawsuit, suing a company for selling you unhealthy products?

MS: I'm not a litigious person. But I live in a country where people have a right to a fair trial if they believe they have just cause. So I, as an American, believe that if you feel you have just cause, then I support your right to go out and sue somebody—again, if there's a reason, if it's not somebody just out to get a paycheck. Every case that's been brought before a judge up to now has been dismissed; that's why we have judges. They just passed something in the Congress right now which

is very funny. It's the "Cheeseburger Bill," House Resolution 336, the Personal Responsibility of Food Consumption Act. It's great. What this bill does is make it illegal for you to sue a food company for making you overweight or obese. My feeling is, it's not a legislator's job to do that to begin with. We have three branches of government for a reason. We have judges whose sole job is to interpret the law. So let the judges do their job. Why do we need this legislation, then? Because the corporations are seeing that they have problems, because they are very, very afraid because they have made themselves targets. Through their marketing practices, through the catering to kids, they've made themselves vulnerable. And as much as you five dollars or my five dollars means a lot to get someone elected, it's the corporations' money that goes into their coffers that's a lot more important. So these bigwigs in D.C. have a lot of relationships with these food companies. Is this going to pass the Senate? I hope not. It's going to be an interesting road. ●

SUPER SIZE ME

Directed by and starring Morgan Spurlock • Opens Fri, May 28

quickly as her spirit.

Kastner, working with a tiny crew, a limited budget and a cheap Betacam video recorder, has crafted a sad, quiet but utterly compelling portrait of two women facing the biggest trauma of their entire lives—one most of us will have to experience as well, as much as we might hate to think about it. But it's as much about the mysteriousness of the human personality as it is about society's treatment of the elderly, and I swear to you that as reluctant as you might be to watch it, *Rage Against the Darkness* packs a devastating emotional punch that you'll find it impossible to shake off. —PAUL MATWYCHUK

Surreality Shorts • Sun, May 30 (8:45pm) Watching the four short films that make up *Surreality Shorts*, I was reminded of Stephanie Zacharek's recent *Salon* review of Guy Maddin's *The Saddest Music in the World: "The Saddest Music,"* she wrote, "strives for surrealism, which is how you get the exact opposite of surrealism. It's a very short hop from 'I can't believe what I'm seeing!' to 'I don't believe in anything that I'm seeing!'" The films in *Surreality Shorts* are notably slick and well-produced, but they're way too aware of how wacky their premises are,

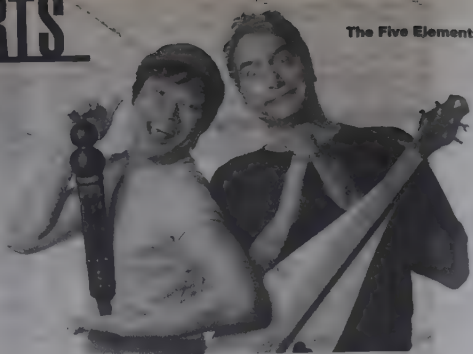
and they wind up feeling laboured and obvious instead of delightfully absurd.

Two of the entries are set in apparently perfect *House and Garden* '50s suburban homes presided over by demented but immaculately dressed housewives. *The Watchers* is a black comedy about a prying maid who discovers that it's not just finickiness that causes her new employer to keep hiring cleaning women. Meanwhile, *Why the Anderson Children Didn't Come to Dinner* is a self-conscious Lemmony Snicket-style tale about three solemn siblings who magically rebel against their prune-faced mother's regimented approach to mealtime.

Also in the collection is *The Truth About Head*, a tedious fable about a "living head" in search of a body to be transplanted onto; and *The Mustache Club*, which is probably the best of the lot, largely because of the lead performance by a redheaded stringbean named Aaron Strate, who plays a geeky teen trying vainly to grow facial hair. It's also nice that a collection called *Surreality Shorts* ends with a character who wishes he looked more like Salvador Dalí. —PAUL MATWYCHUK ●

All screenings take place at Zeidler Hall in the Citadel.

ARTS



The Five Elements

Hot to tots

Kids are encouraged to scream at the International Children's Festival

By KAREN HOWELL

When I was six I wanted to be grown-up so I could go to bed when I wanted, eat hamburgers every night for supper and not have to use my indoor voice when I told my dad about my friends' antics. Now I wish I could nap in the afternoons, have someone make me lunch every day and sing aloud to cheesy elevator music. Well, the International Children's Festival in St. Albert offers all of us erstwhile kids a chance to relive those heady days of our youth.

"From the very first smack of the snare drum, the kids dance," says Rocki Rolletti, the alter ego of Winnipeg performer/broadcaster Peter Jordan and frontman for the Junior Noodle Wave Band. One of more than 90 artists performing at this year's Festival, Jordan and his musical confreres—Laurie Mackenzie, Don Benedictson and Daniel Roy—used to play in a club band until they started having children and couldn't stay out late anymore. They still play dance music, but now their titles include "Woolly Jammies" and "Cinnamon Swirl." Original songs include "Big Bad Ron," about a schoolyard bully, and "Dinosaur Hop," which incorporates music by T. Rex and Blue Öyster Cult.

Of course, they throw in a little Beatles ("All You Need Is Love") and the Who (inevitably, "The Kids Are Alright"), and they keep cranking it out as long as the kids can dance—and the kids can always dance longer than the band can play. "Live music is all about energy transfer," Jordan says. "With kids, it's coming at you so hard it's incredible. We do this one song, 'Do the Rolletti,' and it's that of 'build-up where you divide the crowd into different sections, and there's harmony and the last thing is to scream. Well, the kids scream, and it's a sound just not heard in nature. If you amplified fingers down a blackboard you couldn't have gotten that sound."

A MORE PHILOSOPHICAL approach to children's music has been adopted by Canada's Rick Scott and Hong Kong's Harry Wang, creators of *The Five Elements*. "The whole show is bilingual," says Wang, "with two different cultures and two people trying to understand each other." He says that by looking at the five essential elements—earth, metal, water, wood and fire—we can learn how to balance the different parts of our lives. Their repertoire includes everything from Mozart to Motown with some original songs thrown in, and Wang has translated much of it into Cantonese (but you'll be able to sing along after Wang teaches you a few words). Wang, a magician, will also lead one of 20 workshops during the festival, teaching kids how to do simple sleight-of-hand tricks.

World music has long been a staple of the Children's Festival; this year's edition also features international acts such as Burkina Faso's Badenya Les Flores Coulibaly, H'Sao, a two-family choir who sing in French, Arabic and English and the Kevin Locke Trio, masters of the hoop dance, the fancy dance and the indigenous Lakota flute. But it's also a place for high-quality children's theatre, such as the Zoom troupe's offbeat retellings of storybook standards like "The Tortoise and the Hare" and "The Princess and the Pea," the postmodern *Typo*, about a playwright who becomes enmeshed in his own play and the award-winning Australian drama *The Stones*, which was inspired by the true story of two teenagers who threw rocks from an overpass and accidentally killed a driver. Papermaking workshops, bookbinding classes and kendo lessons are among the more than 200 on-site activities taking place between the indoor shows. It all wraps up on Family Day with an 8 p.m. finale involving the talents of all the mainstage acts. Maybe just this once the kids should be allowed to stay up late, eat hamburgers and scream along with Rocki Rolletti. ●

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

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Moving Pictures

Continued from page 37

sisters who must separate after living together for more than 20 years. After suffering a stroke, Bunny, the vivacious younger sister, is sent to the hospital, where she spends several unhappy months waiting for an opening at the "dream" nursing home she's decided she wants to move into. Meanwhile, unable to take care of herself, Leona, the shy, withdrawn older sister, moves into a retirement home.

At first it appears that Leona will have the hardest time adjusting to her altered circumstances: alone for the first time in her life, she spends her first two months at the home depressed and refusing to socialize—"a cranky old lady," to use Bunny's disapproving description. But unexpectedly, Leona makes friends with a feisty new roommate and soon blossoms into one of the home's most confident and popular residents. Meanwhile, Bunny finds herself largely abandoned by her family and sent to live in a section of the nursing home populated by patients much older and more infirm than she is. In these grim surroundings, her health begins to deteriorate almost as

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Doctored images

Medical students pick up paintbrushes for *Beneath the Mask* exhibition

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

It's hard not to admire medical students. The grueling hours of internship, the sleepless nights, the overwhelming responsibility for the life of another person—these students put so much work and dedication into their studies that I've always felt a little ashamed to express my nagging doubts about their education. And yet, I always suspected something vital was missing in the way our education system trains doctors—to be to reduce their patients into a mass of ever-so-carefully labeled and categorized cells. Could the desire to churn out extremely well-trained and well-read medical technicians be hurting us all on some deeper level? Has the sappy notion of a "caregiver" been laid to eternal rest? If my query is dangerously out of date, at least I'm not alone in posing it.

Thankfully, the new generation of the University of Alberta medical students is not only questioning the way

medicine is practiced; they are taking time out of their grueling schedules to do something about it. And as if that weren't wonderful enough, these students—many of whom have never touched a paintbrush in their lives—have expressed their ideas in art. *Beneath the Mask* is an exhibition of drawings, paintings and mixed media sculpture conveying their insights into Parkinson's disease.

"We are coming to a holistic approach," explains Jennifer Chan,

PREVIEW VISUAL ARTS

the co-ordinator of the Art in Medicine program, curator of the show and a medical student herself. "In class you get the clinical facts. They tell you how you get an illness, what may cause it, how you treat and diagnose a patient, what's the prognosis, but no one will tell you what a patient will go through." In hopes of discovering some of the intangible qualities that textbooks leave out about Parkinson's Disease, Chan and her fellow students contacted the Parkinson's Society of Alberta and invited people afflicted with the illness, their families and caregivers to talk to them about what it's really like to live with

Parkinson's. "The response we got was unbelievably helpful," Chan says. "They really want to help people learn. You start to see what [the patients] are going through."

As soon as these talks and series of lectures were over, Chan confronted her fellow students with a very unusual request: to turn their newfound understanding of Parkinson's Disease into an artform. "Everyone looked at me and said, 'Huh?'" Chan laughs. "They were not sure how to go about it." Some fearfully asked, "If I've never done art, can I still do this?"

BUT THE STUDENTS' INITIAL bewilderment soon subsided and resulted in a show of expressive and deeply felt artworks accompanied by some equally moving commentaries. Cameron Barr, for instance, was struck by the "masklike" appearance of Parkinson's sufferers caused by a loss of motor control over the muscles of the face. "So much of our communication is through non-verbal means," he writes. "The inability to convey emotional tone through expression can leave patients feeling isolated from friends and relatives suddenly thinking their loved one is 'always angry.' The masklike appearance, of course, conceals an emotion-



al life as rich and as varied as ever before. Joy, humour and sorrow all lie barely underneath the surface."

And Jocelyn Chase explains her use of red thread on white fabric as a metaphor for the gradual loss of function Parkinson's patients experience as their disease progresses. "Not every square is changed by the thread," Chase explains, "just like many aspects of the patient's personality remain constant. Characteristics such as patience, hope and appreciation for life are often strengthened despite gradual loss of physical independence."

To hear the words of these students and to see their art gives a new perspective to the way medicine is frequently practiced. This is not cold, impartial science. These

students have transformed the patient into a person. "You can't address a person symptomatically," Chan agrees. "You have to address the patient individually. [If you take] 10 people with Parkinson's they are not feeling the same way, they are not responding in the same way. I am learning so much in terms of myself and life. I am learning so much about other people. My medical knowledge will come from books and on the wards, but I can't get this from books." ●

BENEATH THE MASK

Grey Nuns Hospital (To May 28) • Edmonton General Hospital (May 31-June 11) • Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital (June 14-July 16) • Alberta Hospital (July 19-30)

Pull up the routes

There's nothing forced about the busing in Workshop West's *Secret Spaces*

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

They give you tags at the beginning, red or blue, which are supposed to tell you which end of the bus to sit. Not really necessary, though; as soon as everyone piles in and the machine rumbles to life it becomes the Bus, that place we've all been, with our particular preferences and bus-riding styles, that little traveling bit of public space that rolls around town and takes us where we wanna go.

Except here, in *Secret Spaces: The Bus Project*, we don't know where we're going. We're along for the ride, a curious guided tour/theatre buffet that snakes back and forth across the river, showering us with Edmontonian trivia (pardon me—"history") and presenting four dramatic scenes by four Edmonton playwrights in four different Edmonton locations plus a framing narrative set on the bus itself. Whew! Out of the four basic elements of drama—plot, character, setting and theme—it looks like much-overlooked Setting is getting a ferocious workout tonight!

It begins with Bridget Ryan as chipper, peppy Tour Guide Bridget who swiftly finds herself enmeshed in Beth Graham's *By Heart*, the bus-set framing narrative. And damn if they don't get some good use out of the bus-ness of it all, with Bridget starting her tour guide patter as the passengers gradually become aware somebody's yelling at them from outside. You get right into it, bus-style, craning your neck, looking out the window, trying to see what's going on, watching Bridget race outside and run around with the yelling fellow and drag him back in. (He turns out to be Chris Fassbender.)

REVIEW THEATRE

From there, *By Heart* is mostly a vehicle for buffoonish clownery of the slightly-retarded manchild variety, with Fassbender monkey-climbing around the bars screaming about germs or flouncing up and down the aisle singing "Billie Jean." It's funny; people laughed, though by far the biggest yuks came from the bemused Chinese woman standing at the bus stop not knowing the score. Ah, she knew nothing; how we laughed at her!

Eventually we find our way to the Hull Block, where we learn that they had their flagpole lowered three feet by law because the current flagpole was thought to be a hazard to low-flying airplanes. Then unfolds before us

Kenneth Brown's *Spiral Dive*, a bitter-sweet little scene between Cathy Derkach as a pregnant WWII-era room-renter renting a room to Dave Horak as a returning veteran with some things to tell her about the pilot who fathered her unborn baby.

THAT DONE, everybody troops back down to the bus to wind back University way, hearing about Punch Dickens, who charmed the panties off his soon-to-be wife by flying his plane under the High Level Bridge on a dare. Disgorged in front of the Garneau Theatre, we descend into a dark basement room to watch sallow, drawn-faced Robert Corness as a censor buried in the belly of the theatre in Miko Ouchi's *Assembly*. He crouches like a gremlin, stealing moments from movies that the audiences never notices, claiming bits of the lives of his "special" women, flashing to cold red light and script-speak: "Exterior. Night. The street."

We get popcorn on the way out, and the bus winds through Emily Murphy Park and some more *By Heart* in-and-out-of-the-bus action until we wind our way back across the river, up past Grant Notley Park to the Edmonton Cemetery and the Mausoleum within. Here we have Cathleen Rootsaert's *Legacy*, and it's here we see the most effective finessing of the Setting, binding it to the story in a simple and meaningful way. The scene is under-



stood—a great-grandma (Maralyn Ryan) sits her daughter (Derkach), her grandson (Horak) and her great-grandson (Fassbender) down and tells them where they came from, a young boy from Poland named Ernst Krano-witz who arrived in Canada with a note pinned to his chest. But as you sit in the Mausoleum opposite the remains of Ronald Bishop (b: May 22, 1926 d: July 19, 1937, ever remembered, ever loved), you can't help but feel the bind and whisper of our overlapping lives. You feel like you've been to a root of Edmonton.

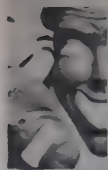
FROM THERE it's a winding road back to Lemarchand Mansion for the final piece of the night, *Finding Felicia*, a Marty Chan spookshow written around a ghost. It's a seamy kinda thing, with one cheap but effective "BOO!" moment and some Ouija board business that probably

would have been creepier if I could have seen any of it from where I was standing. Then it's back on the bus and cheers and bows and "Hail-to-the-Bus-Driver" all the way back to the Bus Barns.

Quite a trip, and you can even order drinks and pick them up at the Doug Udell Gallery halfway through. Bonus! Edmonton-lovers, bus enthusiasts, experimental-theatre enjoyers, all should form an orderly line and take your seat on the bus—red tags in the back, blue tags in front, please. ●

SECRET SPACES: THE BUS PROJECT

Directed by Ron Jenkins • Written by Beth Graham, Kenneth Brown, Miko Ouchi, Cathleen Rootsaert and Marty Chan • Starring Robert Corness, Cathy Derkach, Chris Fassbender, Dave Horak, Bridget Ryan and Maralyn Ryan • To June 5 • 477-5955



theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Travel broadens the mind

Pithl • Varscona Theatre • To June 5

• **reVUE** More than any other playwright in Edmonton, Stewart Lemoine understands the symbolism of small things and humble rituals. There's a scene in *Pithl*, for instance, that takes place at a pie social following a Sunday morning church service; it seems like a fairly ordinary setting until one of the characters casually remarks, "Coming to the church every week gives us hope, and we celebrate that with our pie social." And suddenly, every bite of bumbleberry pie we see the actors consume seems to contain a new layer of lighthearted significance, an extra dose of ceremonial joy. The play ends with another character arranging a place setting on the floor while a Rose Ponselle aria plays on the gramophone behind her—and once again, Lemoine finds a way to take an everyday social act and fill it with unexpected extra meanings. In fact, it's the most poignant scenes in the play, because what we're really seeing is a woman finally letting go of her grief over her late husband. We're seeing a woman finally willing to sit down at the great banquet table of life.

The woman is Virginia Tilford (Davina Stewart), whose husband Weldon disappeared nearly 10 years earlier searching for a silver mine in Ecuador. His body was never discovered and Virginia has been in mourning ever since—that is, until a roving adventurer named Jack Vail (Jeff Haslam) decides to make shaking Virginia out of her depression his personal do-gooder project of the week. With the aid of Virginia's maid Nancy (Leona Brausen), he takes Virginia on an

epic, imaginary quest—without ever leaving her living room, Virginia travels by train, boat and canoe from New Orleans to the heart of the Ecuadorian jungle while Jack plays every man she meets along the way, from an oily ship-board Lothario to a pygmy river guide.

The play is performed with the simplest of means—three actors, four chairs, a rug and a scratchy recording of Louis Armstrong playing the "Muskrat Rumble"—which Lemoine deploys to achieve an enormous emotional payoff. If a piece of bumbleberry pie symbolizes hope and a few pieces of silverware symbolize the end of grief, then what does *Pithl* symbolize? Nothing less than the idea that imaginary experiences can cause wonderful, positive changes in the real world; that there's no wound to the soul that a little bit of wit and compassion can't ease; and that there's nothing more refreshing than a round of rickys or a frivolous tea dance on the poopdeck.

Pithl is as funny and moving as it was when it debuted at the 1997 Fringe Festival. The competition is stiff, but it may be the best play Stewart Lemoine ever wrote, and if you miss out on seeing it, you're denying yourself a very pleasurable experience—and it's not even imaginary.

Sharing the Love

Love + Love • Catalyst Theatre (8529 Gateway Blvd) • May 29-June 12 • preVUE I thought it might be interesting to interview Jonathan Christenson and Bretta Gerecke about their latest collaboration, *Love + Love*, at the beginning of their rehearsal process instead of at the end. In other words, before they really even knew what the final piece was going to look like. Or even what it was specifically going to be about.

I wanted to talk to them early because, for Christenson and Gerecke, the process of creating a new theatre piece is as exciting as the end product. There's no other playwright/director in town who creates shows the way Christenson frequently does, by working with

a designer before a single word of the script is even written. "One day," says Gerecke, "Jonathan asked me, 'What do you think of a show about love?' And I said, 'Sure! Great!' It was as simple as that. So last summer, we just did a lot of talking about what kind of experience we wanted people to have and asking 'What is love? How does it feel?' It was a lot of very loosey-goosey free-association, but



we wound up taking a lot of what we were seeing around us, from what was written on the bathroom wall to overheard conversations to movies about love, and trying to find ways to abstract images and symbols from all of that."

Gerecke and Christenson's past collaborations have evolved in unpredictable ways: *The Blue Orphan*, for instance, which ended up as a densely plotted, large-cast musical epic, began life three years ago as an atmospheric art installation called *Paper Flight Cocoon Storm*. *Love + Love* sounds like it will occupy the middle ground between *Orphan* and *Storm*: it'll have a dynamic performance element (courtesy of aerial acrobats John Ulyatt and Annie Dugan), but the tone will probably wind up on the impressionistic, non-linear side.

"If you expect most plays to be like

a novel or a short story, this one will be more like a coffeetable book," says Christenson. "It's a form I really respond to—these books that choose a theme and then give you a collection of photographs, drawings, poetry and historical information about it. And you can pick it up and open it anywhere and get a sort of collage that hopefully will resonate with you in some way.... [*Love + Love*] will be a collage of sounds, texts, images, movement that we hope will create an environment that stimulates people to think and feel about love. Which sounds really flaky, but I think it's a word we don't spend a lot of time thinking about what it really means."

"We have reams of text and music and John and Annie all on the love boat with us," Gerecke says cheerfully. "And today we actually start bringing it all together."

Without Heathers

Love + Love caps one of the busiest and most successful seasons in the history of Catalyst Theatre: besides mounting original, in-house productions like *Dream Life* and hosting another round of Blind Dates With Theatre, the company also executed a wildly ambitious world tour of *The Blue Orphan*. All this activity was made possible in large part by the tireless behind-the-scenes work of Catalyst artistic producer Heather Redfern, who announced last week that she would be leaving the company at the

end of August.

"Running a small theatre company is a hard thing to do, and after eight years, it was time for me to think about what comes next," says Redfern, who still isn't sure what position she'll end up taking next. (She is, however, board chair for the massive Magnetic North Theatre Festival, which takes place June 9-19 in Edmonton.)

Probably the most tangible effect of Redfern's tenure is the Catalyst building itself, which wasn't always the cozy, inviting performance space it is today. "It's almost eight years to the day when Joey [Tremblay] and Jonathan [Christenson] first brought me into this building," she says, "and it was disgusting. The roof had been leaking for a very long time, there were big puddles on the floor, it smelled, there were no bathrooms, barely enough light to see, no windows that let any light in. I looked at them and I said, 'You're kidding.'"

Since then, Redfern has helped Catalyst become arguably Edmonton's most internationally prominent theatre company, exporting their own shows to the Edinburgh Fringe and importing shows for the Blind Dates series. I'll always be indebted to Redfern for having invited me to inaugurate that series by restaging my Fringe play *The Key to Violet's Apartment* in the Catalyst space—I honestly found working with Redfern and her staff to be just as rewarding an experience as rehearsing the actual show. Hopefully she'll continue to work in Edmonton; the city's arts scene will be much poorer without her. ☉

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DANCE

FEATS FESTIVAL OF DANCE (420-1757/422-8107)

• June 3-13 • Presented by Alberta Dance Alliance • Victoria School for the Performing and Visual Arts: Ballet and hip hop workshops; June 3-6 • U of A: Urban Uprising: A workshop combining rock climbing and dance presented by Vertical Dance; June 12 • **VENUE TBA:** Vibe, Ballet and hip hop with choreographers Jean Grand-Maitre and Richard O'Sullivan; grand finale June 11 • **Westbury Stage:** Translata Arts Barn: HYPE: Hip hop by artists and DJs; June 5 (after-party in the lobby) • **Various Venues:** Urban Dance Encounters; June 3-12 • **McIntyre Zanzibar Park:** Urban Dance Encounters; June 5 (noon-4pm); free • **Outdoor Venue TBA:** contemporary dance combined with climbing and rappelling presented by Vertical Dance; June 12 • **Honey Stage, W&M:** Challenge; June 12, 13 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

A LITTLE BIT O' DIS AND A LITTLE BIT O' DAT Kaasa Theatre (420-1757/944-9115) • Presented by Kompany!, choreography by Darrell Roles, Sharon Richardson and Ron Schuster • May 27-29 (8pm), May 30 (2pm) • \$18 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

ODISSI DANCE RECITAL Provincial Museum Auditorium (420-1757/438-7242) • Presented by the Edmonton Raja-Mala Music Society featuring Sanchita Bhattacharya • Sat, June 5 (7:30pm) • \$15 (adult)/\$12 (member/student/senior) • Tickets available at door, TIX on the Square

PICTURES FROM THE PAST: EDMONTON 1904-2004 Myer Horowitz Theatre (428-7808) • Presented by Dance Alberta • May 30 (2pm) • \$15 • Tickets available at Dance Alberta

VOHON AND FRIENDS Provincial Museum of Alberta Theatre, 12845-102 Ave (988-2913) • Dance showcase featuring Vohon Dance Ensemble, Winnipeg's Ruskala Dance Ensemble, jazz ballet, hip hop dancers and more • Sat, May 29 (7pm) • \$15

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611/4808-5900) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm (closed all hols) • **How Low Laver Gallery:** HANDWORK SERIES: TO THE BONE, IN THE BLOOD, FROM THE HEART. Series by Calgary textile artist Jane Kold; until July 7 • **FINE LEGS, GREAT CATCHES, HOT SEATS:** Works by NAT's Advanced Woodworking and Furniture Design graduates; class opening reception: Thu, May 27 (6:30-9:30pm); until July 7

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-3679) • Paintings by Andrew Rzesewski

ARTSMAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Knoll Building, 10217-106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Brian Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pedersen, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rossello, Greg Swain, Anna Szal, Eugenie Uhlund and guests

BLACK GOLD GALLERY AND FRAME 4724-50 Ave. Leduc (986-6393) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-5pm • Featuring mixed media artworks by Arthur Evoy (1924-2003) as well as prints of various artists artworks • Through May

CHANDLER ART GALLERY 5002-50 St (436-5843/477-3463) • **CHIGIRI-IE EXHIBITION** • Until June 5

CHRISTIE BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 3621 Whyte Ave (459-8210) • Open: Mon-Fri 11am-5pm, Sat, by appointment • **SUMMER SALON:** Oil paintings by Christ Bergstrom • Until September 30

CITY ARTS CENTRE 10943-84 Ave (496-6955) • Artworks by students and instructors • May 28-30 • Opening reception: May 28 (12-5pm)

DOUGLAS ADELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • Artworks by Simon Hughes • May 29-June 12 • Opening reception: Sat, May 29 (2-4pm)

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 254 Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **JAMES WILSON MORRICE AND THE EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE:** June 4-Aug. 15 • 100 YEARS 100 PICTURES: June 4-Sept. 19 • **CANADIAN CONTEXT:** June 4-Sept. 19 • **KITCHEN GALLERY: TIDAL TRACE:** A multi-media installation by Imelda Osborne and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Arts District Open House:** Film screenings, workshops, scavenger hunt • May 30 • **Children's Gallery: PELLAGIANO:** until Jan. 2005 • \$5 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior), \$4 (children 6-12)/free (member/children 3 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open: Wed-Fri 10am-5:30pm, Sat 10am-4pm, closed long weekends • **NEW WORKS:** Paintings by Kate More • Until May 29

FAIR GALLERY Room 11, Fine Arts Building, 112 St. 89 Ave, U of A Campus (962-9505) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **TO CALL ME ISHAM:** Artworks by Carolyn Campbell; until May 29 • **DESIGNING A BETTER JOE:** Design works by Adrien Cho • Until May 29

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-9pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 12-5pm • **Eskimo soapstone carvings:** Inuks by G. Arluk, Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by M. Tallo • Through May

FRINGE GALLERY 9301 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm **FAMILIAR RINGS:** Paintings by Carol Wyle • Until May 31 • **SPEAKING VOLUMES:** Paintings by Linda Camaro; Through June

GALLERY DE JONGE 27022A Hwy 16A, Spruce Grove (962-9505) • Open Tue-Sun 11-5pm, anytime by appointment • Work by local artists Beth Coullas, Art Cummins, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

HARCOURT GALLERY 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **AM I GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, SEX, FOOD?** Artworks by Shelley Rothenberger; until June 12 • **Front Room:** • **BORDERLINE:** Artworks by Kristene Callan; until June 12

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • **SPRING DEBUT:** • Until June 1

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by Jim Alernman, Jim Brager, Glenda Beaver, Jack Ellis, Linda Nelson, George Tosczak, George Werber, Pewter by Raymond Cox, bronzes by Gina McDougall-Cohor • Through May

JOHNSON GALLERY 10817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Andrew Reikman, Ali Roberson, prints by Toth, Edmonton Sky Line prints by Loren Chabot, Photographs of Edmonton River Valley areas by John Johnson • Through May

LATITUDE 53 10248-106 St (423-5353) • **5TH ANNUAL VISUALS:** A festival of performance art and time-based art featuring the curatorial focus of time • Until May 29

LITTLE CHURCH GALLERY 455 King Street, Spruce Grove • 2004 ALBERTA COMMUNITY ARTS CLUB ZONE SHOW FOR CENTRAL ALBERTA: Paintings by artists ages 15-18 from central Alberta

LONDONDERRY MALL (473-9266) • Open: Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat 9:30am-5:30pm • Canada's Largest Wildlife Museum • May 25-29 • Free

MC MULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (467-7152) • **ALGERIA:** Paintings and sculptures by Annette Ayne, Carol Hill, Pat Di Marcello, Ingrid Martel, Mary Topping, Jayne Willoughby Scott and Mary Wright • Until June 20

MC PAG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • **THE ART OF YOUTH:** Artworks by students of Memorial Composite High School, Stony Plain • May 26-June 28

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm • **SCIENCE ON THE MOVE:** Until June 27

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm; Thu 10am-8pm • **HIGH ENERGY:** Art work by St. Albert's High School; until May 29 • **SEAFARERS AND FISHWIVES:** Photographic artworks by Jennifer Crane with a display from the Clothing and Textiles department of Human Ecology (U of A); until June 3-26 • Opening reception and art walk: June 3 (6-9pm)

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-1300) • Open: Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • **THROUGH THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE:** Embroidery traditions and high craftsmanship of women from Gujarat, India; until June 6 • **IN THE SHADOW OF VOLCANOS:** Indonesian artworks; until June 6 • **WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN? HEALING THE LEGACY OF THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS:** until Aug. 2 • **BIG THINGS 3:** Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; until Mar. 29 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY:** Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit.

Spotlight Gallery: EVERY MOTHER'S REB: ALBERTA'S POLIO EXPERIENCE: until Sept. 12 • **The Natural History Gallery:** • **BUG ROOM:** Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY:** Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TRASHURES OF THE EARTH:** Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY:** Permanent exhibit • Wild Alberta every weekend. Presentations start at 1 pm and 2 pm • Admission is half price Sat and Sun (9-11am)

PYGMALION SCHOOL OF FINE ART 112, 44 St. Thomas Street, St. Albert • **IT'S MORE THAN REFRIGERATOR ART:** Artworks by students • June 3-4 (6-9pm)

RED STRAP ART MARKET 10305-97 St (497-2211) • Open: Tue-Sun 11am-5pm • Artworks by various artists and artisans

REYNOLDS-ALBERTA MUSEUM Wetzelswin (1-800-661-4726) • **WAREHOUSE STORIES:** Hundreds of rare aircraft, cars and tractors • \$25 (family)/\$9 (adult)/\$7 (senior)/\$5 (youth)/child 6 and under free

RIGOLETTI'S CAFÉ 10068-10th St • **INTERLUDE:** Drawings and Polaroid transfers by E. Ross Bradley • Through May

RODOLFS AND COMPANY GALLERY 10130-103 St (426-4035) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat 12-5pm • Glass blown sculptures by Mark Gibeau, Arte Vargas, Marcia de Vique and Jennifer Jacoby. Also metal artworks by Rogelio Miano and Lynn Gratz • **Hotel MacDonald:** Acrylic paintings by Steve Mitts • **Oxford Tower:** Oil paintings by Audrey Plannmuller • **Scotia Place:** Steve Mitts • Until June 30

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • **HOW TO BECOME A MIRROR:** SNAP membership show; until May 22 • **TERRESTRIAL FORCES:** Printmaking artworks by Karen Kunc; May 27-July 3; opening reception: Thu, May 27 (7-9pm); Artist lecture and slide presentation: Sat, May 29 (1-3pm); free

SNOWBIRD GALLERY W&M, 7882-17 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kuzo and Jacqueline Stenberg

STANLEY A. MILLNER LIBRARY Centre for Reading and the Arts • **MILLENNIUM IN A BOX:** Handmade books, a conceptual interpretation of where the millennium is leading by Canadian artists • Until June 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990) • **FACES AND PLACES:** Artworks by Alexandra Allenbright, Bruce Allen, Doug Fraser, Suzanne Loutas, Mary Lee Small, Helen Smith, Bruce Thompson, Pat Wagensveld • Until June 26

STUDIO 321 Rice Howard Way, 10168-100A St (424-6746) • Open: Sat-Sun 1-4pm • **THE FATHERSON EXHIBIT:** Landscapes, florals, portraits by Marc Munan and sculptures by Louis Munan

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Flr, Harcourt House, 10215-12 St (421-1731) • **PLATINUM PERCEPTIONS:** Photographs by Allen King • Until June 12

VANDERLEESIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • Paintings by James Lahey, David Alexander, Sam Lam, Jonathan Forrest, and Gregory Hardy. Sculpture by Isla Burns • Until June 8

WILWOOD GALLERY AND STUDIO 5410-50 St, Willowood, (780) 425-3904 • Open: Wed-Sun 11am-5pm, or by appt • Metal, wood, relief, and clay sculptures by Pat Di Marcello and other artists • Through May

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Flr, 10150 Jasper Ave (424-2122 ext. 226)

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Gail Sidonie Sobat reads from *A Winter's Tale*; Thu, May 27 (7:30pm) • Donna Kane reads from her book of poems *Seasons on Fire*; Fri, May 28 (7:30pm) • Barry Dempster reads from *Wanted: Out*; A. J. Levin reads from *Monks' Fruit*; Mon, May 31 (7:30pm) • Kate Brad reads from a selection of her poetry and prose; Fri, June 4 (7:30pm)

LAURIE GREENWOOD'S VOLUME II BOOKS 12433-102 Ave • Darren O'Donnell, reads from his new novel *Your Secrets Sleep With Me* • May 27 (7:30pm) • Free

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CENTRE Room 3-40 • Kate Brad reads from a selection of her poetry and prose • Fri, June 4 (noon)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Jon Charles; May 26-29

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Improv comedy • Every Sun

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St (481-2786) • Comedy Mondays with Yuk Tuls on Tour

RED'S W&M (481-6420) • Hypno Sundays • 9:30pm • Sebastian Steel; May 30

THEATRE

CAROUSEL Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Rodgers and Hammerstein's tearjacking musical adaptation of Ferenc Molnar's play *Liliom*, about an irresponsible carnival barker who is allowed to return from the dead for one day and try to repair the lives of the wife and teenage daughter he left behind • Until July 4 • Tickets available at Mayfield Dinner Theatre box office

CHIMPOTVI Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-3339)

6095) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

DIE-HASTY VARSONA THEATRE, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Meer, Josh Dean, Danna Stewart and Leona Brausen celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvisational show open by spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace Helwig • Every Monday (8pm)

IT'S COUNTRY COUNTRY Asinthe Theatre, 11315-106 Ave (420-1757) • Presented by Mostly Winter Theatre • May 29 (8pm) • \$10 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LOVE + LOVE Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) • An unusual new blend of theatre, visual art and music co-created by actor/playwright/composer Jonathan Christensen and designer Brett Gerech • June 5 • \$21 (adult)/\$16 (student) • Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

NEXTSTEP 2004 Various venues throughout Edmonton (453-2440) • The latest edition of Theatre Network's annual multidisciplinary arts festival, featuring visual art, music, film and readings and full productions of new plays by young, emerging artists • June 3-13 • Tickets available at Roto Theatre box office

OCEAN'S ELEVEN AND A HALF Cadenabbia Dinner Theatre, Quila Entertainment Hotel, 11303 Fort Rd (448-9339) • Charming criminal Harry Ocean reunites his old gang of gambling thieves in order to pull off a daring casino heist in this musical spoof of the film *Ocean's 11* • Until Aug. 7 • \$34.95-\$49.95 • For Tickets, call 748-9339

OH SUSAANNA! The Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, varsconatheatre.com/ohsussana • Edmonton's live Euro-style variety show, featuring games, musical numbers and celebrity interviews, all presided over by international glamour-gal Susanna Patchouli and her co-hosts, Eric, God of Love • Sat, May 29 (11pm)

PITHI VARSONA THEATRE, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399 voice box 2420-1757) • Leona Brausen, Jeff Haslam and Danna Stewart star in this revival of director/playwright Stewart Lemoine's magical 1997 fringe play about a charming drifter who uses the power of imagination to provide a grieving New England widow with a sense of closure about the fate of her husband, who disappeared during an expedition into the South American jungle • Until June 5 (Tue-Sat 8pm, Sat 2pm) • \$18 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior/Equity); Pay-What-You-Can: Tue evening and Sat matinee • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

SECRET SPACES: THE BUS PROJECT Bus, leaving from The 3rd Space, 11516-103 St (477-5955/420-1750) • Presented by Workshop West Theatre • Ron Jenkins directs Robert Cornes, Cathy Derack, Chris Fensbender, Dave Horak and Bridget Ryan in this unusual theatrical experience, in which audiences travel around Edmonton on a bus in order to witness new site-specific short plays by Ken Brown, Mary Chan, Beth Graham, Melsio Ouch and Catherine Rootsoot • Until June 13 • \$30 (opening night)/\$25 (adult)/\$22 (student/senior) • Tickets available at Workshop West, TIX on the Square

THE SOUND OF MUSIC The Citadel, Shochor Theatre, 9628-101A Ave (425-1820) • Tom Wood directs Rodgers and Hammerstein's family musical about the romance that blossoms between an emotionally rigid Austrian baron and the nonconformist, guitar-strumming nun he hires to act as governess for his seven children • Until June 6 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

SURF'S UP! Jubilations Dinner Theatre, (484-2424) • An affectionate, song-filled parody of the Frankie Avalon/Annette Funicello "beach party" movies of the 1960s set on Bongo Beach at the secluded tip of the North Saskatchewan River • Until June 6

THEATRESPORTS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-3339) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available by phone

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EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

FEED YOUR SOUL DAYS FOR WOMEN (479-5011) • Connect with other women and feed your soul • May 29 • Pre-register

KARMA TASHI LING TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Lojong (Mind Training) Tape series meeting every Wed (7:30pm)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling (Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm)) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kunkhe Dharchoe of Namgyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7-9pm); beginners • Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm): advanced

UPWARD BOUND TOASTMASTERS Baker Centre, 10th Fl, 10025-106 St (477-2613) • Every Wed (7pm). Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership

VOICE FOR ANIMALS St. Joseph High School, 10830-109 St, Rm 246 (490-0905) • Free information and film session on the massive overbreeding and killing of companion animals • Wed, June 2 (7pm)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the International organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 117258 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys • Every Mon: Free pool. Djs: Arrow Chaser, Jeffy Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbian Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

(422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends to share in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

FACULTÉ SAINT-JEAN 8406-91 St, Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Against HIV/AIDS • May 29 (9am-5pm) • \$50 (non-member)/free (member) • Pre-register

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOG) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10025-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 702A, 10242-105 St (448-1768) • www.icare-alberta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCS, Suite 45, 9912-106 St • Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a supportive environment (fall and winter terms). Contact Kris Wells (wells@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Wonham (mwonham@ualberta.ca) for info • www.ualberta.ca/~cied/eps/AgapeVerdana.htm

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Carneau United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/livpos (488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society. Peer-facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF

EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

OUT IS IN (492-0767) • A youth arts project about LGBT issues, and addressing homophobia in schools and in the community • For more info: www.ualberta.ca/~outin or outin@ualberta.ca

PLAC GLCCS, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgendered

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRISM TIMES (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thru 6pm-3am, Fri-Sat 6pm-4am • TUE: Hot Butt Contest (6pm-midnight) with DJ Jarry • WED: Amateur strip with Wena Lux, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • THU: Rotating shows: Ladonna's review, Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jarry • FRI: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outwark, DJ Jarry and male stripper Downstairs: female stripper • SAT: Every Sat like new years. Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jarry, new music w/ DJ Dan and Mike Downstairs: Retro music • SUN: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Beer Bash; every long weekend with DJ Jarry • Tue-Thru 51 (member)/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

TRANSSEXUAL TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP egrieh@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thru 1-12; Fri Sat 1-3 • Gay nightclub. Every Sun-Thru (7-12am): karaoke with Tizy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCS), 45, 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.youthtripod.com/yay • Every Sat (7-9pm) • A facilitated social support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

APRIL 11 NATIONAL CAL WASH DAY Canadian Native Friendship Centre, 11205-101 St • Fundraiser for the Canadian Native Friendship Centre • Sat, June 5 (11am-4pm)

ART OF LIVING GALA Hotel MacDonald, Empire Ballroom (488-5742) • Dining, music, and an art auction presented by the local art community and the

HIV Network of Edmonton • Sat, June 5 (7pm (dinner), 7:30pm (dinner)) • \$150 • Proceeds to support the programs and services of HIV Edmonton

ARTS DISTRICT OPEN HOUSE (420-1757) • CBC Broadcast Centre: Mo Lefever and friend (jazz guitar) • The Edmonton Art Gallery: Workshops, video screenings of the PBS video series Art 21: Art in the Twenty-First Century, and a scavenger hunt • Winspear Centre: Featuring the Davis Pipe Organ • Citadel Theatre: Backstage tours • Stanley A. Milner Library: Program: The Decorated Page: Making Scrapbooks and Journals, the Bill Durr Jazz Trio, magic show by Ron Pearson • Metro Cinema: Private Ties: Albert: Private films and videos, Buhrle's Withering Heights • Information available at TIX on the Square • Sun, May 30 (noon-4pm)

BELL'S CITY CHASE Throughout Edmonton, www.citychase.com • Urban challenge, obstacle course, scavenger relay • Sat, May 29 (9:30 registration) • \$150 (team of two)

BOYLE-MCAULEY HEALTH CENTRE Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A, 89 Ave, 112 St (422-7333 ext. 266) • An Evening of Music: Featuring Christian Mena, The North Country Ramblers, Oran Chai and Charlie Austin (piano) • Thu, June 3 (6:30pm reception/silent auction; 7:30-10:30pm show)

CANADIAN VOICE ARTS FESTIVAL (420-1757) • Presented by Opera Nuova • Until June 20 • Passes for the entire event (not including the Ambassador Concert) \$95 (adult)/\$55 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL Various venues in St. Albert (459-1542/451-8000) • Open Tue-Fri 9:30am-3:30pm; Sat 9:30am-5pm • June 1-5 • Tickets available at TicketMaster, Arden Theatre box office

DISCOVER THE CHINESE LION DANCE Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (420-1757/439-1160) • Presented by Ging Wai Kung Fu • June 1 (7-9pm) • \$11 (adult)/\$8 (student/senior)/\$20 (family) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LOVE + LOVE, THE GALA Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-7500) • Catalyst Theatre fundraiser • May 29 • Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

RELAY FOR LIFE U of A's Foote Field, 11601-68 Ave (437-8419) • Canadian Cancer Society, Tyler Hamilton, from Canadian Idol's first season, is scheduled to perform, Spokesperson • May 28 (7pm)

RUSSIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL St. John's Cultural Centre, 10611-110 Ave • Featuring Russian music, art and craft exhibit, and Russian desserts • Sun, May 30 (3-7pm) • \$10 (adult)/\$5 (child)/children under 5 free

LA VIE EN FRANGE CABARET TransAlta Arts Barns, 10330-84 Ave (448-9000) • Presented by Fringe Theatre Adventures, featuring excerpts from upcoming Fringe Festival productions, a silent and live auction and food • May 28-29 (7pm) • \$35 • Tickets available at the Fringe Theatre Adventures office

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

BILLY BOB'S Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (484-7751) • Every Thu (9pm): Music: Tmva with Escapee Entertainment • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm): with Escapee Entertainment

BILLY BUDD'S 9839-63 Ave (438-1148) • Karaoke: Idol contest • Every Sat (8:30pm)

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm): Hosted by Jeanne

CLAREVIEW PUB Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave (454-9928) • Every Wed

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

KELLY'S 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed (9pm)

L.B.'S 23 Alons Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue/Thu (9pm)

LEGENDS 6104-162 St (481-2786) • Every Wed (9pm)

MICHAEL'S 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon: with Jammin' Jamie

ORLANDO'S 115163-121 St (457-1195) • Every Sun (9pm)/Wed (10pm)

ORLANDO'S 115 135-127 St (451-7799) • Every Wed/Thu (9pm)

PEPPERS Westmount Centre, 111 Ave, 135 St (451-8022) • Every Thu: Karaoke by Stonerock Productions

RATTLESHAKE SALOON (438-8878) • Karaoke: Wednesdays

ROSEBOWL PIZZA 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL DOWNTOWN 10000-101 St (423-3499) • Every Mon (9pm): Inveco • Every Tue-Sat (9pm-1am): Karaoke

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL HIGH STREET 10315-124 St (482-1600) • Daily (9:30pm)

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL OLD STRATHCONA 10475-80 Ave (439-7211) • Thu/Fri/Sat (9:30pm-1:30am)

SHERLOCK HOLMES 10541-82 Ave (433-9676) • Every Sun (9pm): with Scott

STRATHCONA PUB 9514-87 St (465-5478) • Every Wed/Fri (9pm)

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am) • Every Tue (8pm-midnight)

WINSTONS PUB 9016-132 Ave (457-4883) • Every Wed/Fri/Sat (9:30m-1am) with DJ Centaur SID

WOODY'S 11725 Jasper Ave, upstairs (488-6636) • Every Sat/Sun/Mon with Randy • Every Tue/Wed with Tizy

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By ROB BREZSNY

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 19

I almost always urge you to see the glass as half-full, not half-empty. But this week I'm more cautious. Why? Because you may soon be pressured to buy into overly optimistic fantasies. Even people you trust may encourage you to place inflated faith in shaky promises. So ask lots of probing questions, please. Beware of groupthink. On the other hand, there's no need to adopt a sour, suspicious perspective. Being cynical will not automatically make you insightful. See if you can manage to be a cheerful skeptic, as generous and open-minded as you are alert for the hype.

TAURUS

Apr 20 - May 20

A traveler from California recently collected his 15 minutes of fame when he rode his board for the 10,407th consecutive day. During those 28 years, Dale Webster never took a vacation. To keep his mornings free, he worked exclusively at low-paying night jobs. He surfed on the day his daughter was born and the day he scar tissue because he has gazed into the sun for so long, and he's literally afraid to

stop surfing for even 24 hours. I nominate him to be both your role model and anti-role model, Taurus. It's a perfect time to commit yourself with fierce passion to a long-term dream, but only if you promise not to let your devotion degenerate into manic obsession.

GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

I lead a group called the Prayer Warriors. We petition God on behalf of people who need help in summoning divine intervention. Here's the prayer we'll be saying for your tribe in the coming months. Dear God: We beseech You to give a big, beautiful home to all Geminis who want one. If they aren't allowed to have that for karmic reasons, please grant them a comfortable apartment with no obnoxious roommates. If You can't manage that, bless them with a trailer that's free of mildew. If that's impossible, bestow on them a tent that doesn't leak and a cheap place to pitch it. If that's too much to ask, let them have their own treehouse in a forest that's not too dark and scary. And if all that's out of the question, please at least help them feel at home in the world wherever they are.

CANCER

June 21 - July 22

Antibiotics have been miracle drugs for more than 60 years, but their potency is fading as bacteria evolve to become resistant to them. This has led some British doctors to revive a medieval approach to healing—placing maggots in open wounds. Seriously. The creepy creatures are fast and effective in cleansing infections. I'd like this to serve as your operative metaphor in the coming weeks, Cancerian. As you strive to mend old psychic lesions, call on the wisdom of the past, even if it involves a cure that makes you a bit uneasy.

LEO

July 23 - Aug 22

The puzzle is not as difficult as you imagine. In fact, it has only seven pieces—far fewer than you've assumed. Perhaps you got thrown off by its simplicity; it does have a superficial resemblance to a more complicated puzzle from your past. The ironic thing is that you'll never figure it out it as long as you're so serious and stressed about it. To create the conditions that will lead to a solution, relax, have as much fun as possible and assume that the puzzle will soon solve itself.

VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sept 22

Most American children don't want to grow up to be president anymore. The practice of politics is boring and sickening, they tell pollsters. There's too much pressure and too much arguing involved. Despite this trend, I predict that in the coming weeks, a disproportionately large percentage of Virgo youngsters will fantasize about someday becoming President of the United States. I further predict that one of these kids will ultimately be elected Commander in Chief in 2044. As for you Virgo adults, I believe that no matter what country you live in, events in the coming days will awaken your dormant reserves of ambition and authority.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22

The time a rodeo cowboy has to stay on a bucking bronco to qualify: eight seconds. The time a lion-tamer holds his head in a lion's mouth: seven seconds. The time it takes for a skydiver's parachute to open: six seconds. The time it takes for thunder to travel a mile: five seconds. The time it will take, sometime in the coming week, for a divine intervention to reveal a galvanizing vision of your possible future: 10 seconds. The time it may take for you to

fully understand the meaning of the vision: four months.

SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21

The Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai wrote, "The soul is a search; the soul is a dance of searches for whatever is lost." Let that be your guiding thought in the coming weeks, Scorpio. The astrological omens suggest that it's high time for you to go looking for a missing treasure. The best way to ensure that you find it is to feed and praise and give free rein to the part of you that you call your soul.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21

What kind of archer do you want to be when you grow up, Sagittarius? Would you like to be: (1) the kind of archer who aims in the general direction of several big targets in the distance; (2) the kind who aims at a single medium-sized target in the middle distance; (3) the kind who aims at many small targets that aren't too far away; or (4) the kind who never aims at any target at all, but just enjoys the thrill of shooting lots of arrows everywhere? This is a perfect time for you to settle on one of these four options.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 19

My friend Katherine comes from an old southern family that has recorded its history for generations. She says her great-great-grandmother Elizabeth was born in Greenville, South Carolina in 1852. Until she was 81, Elizabeth suffered from asthma. Then she was cured completely and lived free of its ravages until she died in 1955 at the age of 103. I nominate Elizabeth to be your inspirational role model for the next two weeks, Capricorn. Believe it or

not, you now have the power to shed a burden or cure a malady that you've always feared was a permanent cure.

AQUARIUS

Jan 20 - Feb 18

Welcome to the Happiness Season, Aquarius. The entire universe is now conspiring to provoke in you an abiding sense of joy and well-being. You can resist, of course; it's your God-given right to use your free will to repel this influx of contentment. But in case you decide to co-operate with the cosmic trend, here are a few helpful thoughts to propel you. "Happiness is a state of going somewhere wholeheartedly, without regret or reservation." —William H. Sheldon. "I'd rather be a failure at something I enjoy than be a success at something I hate." —George Burns. "Happiness is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose." —Helen Keller. "Now and then it's good to pause in our pursuit of happiness and just be happy." —Anonymous. "To be without some of the things you want is an indispensable part of happiness." —Bertrand Russell.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

I predict that some of you overly sensitive Pisceans will soon be beaten down by the cold, cruel world. Maybe you'll move in with your parents or flee to the middle of nowhere and live off the grid in a log cabin. Similarly, more than a few of you Piscean artists, actors, writers and musicians will get weary of the uphill battle to make a living from doing what you love. You'll think about selling out, seeking dull but secure gigs in the corporate world. But I'm begging all of you not to give up. Please continue your heroic struggles to be true to yourselves. If you can manage to hold on a while longer, you will be blessed with a breakthrough no later than September 1. ☺

CLASSIFIEDS

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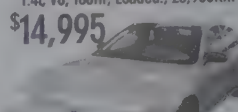
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Networks New Media is searching for artists to display their work within the cafe. Contact Angie (780) 439 0303 or networkscfe@hotmail.com

Artists paint on site. Free on weekends. Just bring your easel and supplies. **Red Strap Market**, 13035-97 St. 497-2211.

Dance Alberta auditions: June 6, 1-3pm, reg. 12:30pm; bring resume, headshot, pointe shoes. \$15 @ Dance Alberta, ph 428-7808.

Live/work studio avail. July 1 in DT Edm. Arshab. 625 Sq Ft + loft space. \$600/month appt. forms avail. @ www.arshab.com Ph Jeff @ 439-9532.

Medieval Dues vignettes free to a good home. Call Ken 922-8055 or Karen 922-5412.

TELL US YOUR STORY: Do you have stories of happenings relating to deceased relatives or friends? Contact: A Healy, 3 Canal Cove, Longford, Co. Longford, Ireland or e-myjourney@eircom.net

Independent film to be shot locally. Auditions May 22, 23: for 2 male actors. Small main 17-21 yrs and one larger bearded man late 30s early 40s. Ph Bill 464-2662, 975-7554 (celly). GALEN 466-0087.

GET YOUR ART ON! Harcourt House Arts Centre seeks participants for the 2nd annual **Drawing in Stride**. A drawing and walking fundraising event to take place on June 26, 2004. Register: Ph Jen 426-4180/e-mail: harcourt@telusplanet.net

Call for submissions: 1-year Artist in Residence at Harcourt House Arts Centre. **Deadline May 31.** Info: 426-4180, harcourt@telusplanet.net

Volunteers needed for national theatre festival June 9-19. Call Cathy at Magnetic North Theatre Festival 492-8802. www.magneticontheatrefestival.ca

SCREENWRITERS circle. First Tues of ea. Month @ 7:30pm. Call 429-1671 or visit FAVA.ca

Darksand looking for someone to do new web site for artistic credit.

Develop filmmaking skills at the MONDAY NIGHT CLUB: screenwriters, directors & actors workshop a scene for camera. \$2. Ph 429-1671 or visit FAVA.ca

Looking for spirited dancers & musicians (18-30yrs) for existing improvising collective. Marcus 430-6429

Visions of fantastical, magical, inspirational living storybook theatre troupe bazaar extraordinaire! **Dancers/musicians/actors** ph Marcus 430-6429

10th Annual Seven Hills Literary Contest: unpublished works: **Children's Literature—deadline June 30. Memoirs—deadline July 31. Short Story—deadline Aug. 31.** Info: Tallahassee Writers Association www.twsonline.org

musicians

Looking for a lead singer and bassist. Metal alt band. Must be able to tour. Ph 604-5388.

Lead guitarist seeks F/T band. any style Ph: 466-5513/439-9552.

Est. orig. rock band seeks pro lead guitar player and bassist. Reply to Norm@thejackmon.com

WANTED KEYS: Est. reg. gigging, prog. hard rock band looking for Keyboard player. (780)918-2064 darksand5000@hotmail.com

FOLK GUITARIST needed for tribute show in July by an est Edmonton theatre co. Contact Marleigh @ 488-2772 for details.

NFP looking for funds! NFP has an entertainment-based approach that can help significantly. fundraiser@musicale.ca

Musical needs female singers for "One Voice" union choir to help celebrate Alberta's 100th. onevoiceinfo@musicale.ca

Singer? Looking for training? Exceptional mental models training system. tellmemore@musicale.ca

Lead guitar player req for est. busy P/T country-classic rock band. Vocals, good gear, good attitude. Ph 474-4502 alt 5pm.

Compassionate, eclectic, gentler hand drummer looking for like-minded musicians for jams, exploration, study, projects. Marcus 430-6429

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Established Big Band needs experienced players. Call Blake 474-3351 blake@actualjazz.com

Guitarist Wanted 18+ w/vocals for collaboration with singer/songwriter. Inlt: Weezer, OLP, Bush, No drugs. zyzp19@hotmail.com

Wanted: Exp bassist/vocalist (gigs, rec) Grasp of styles, able to travel some weekends. Have pro gear, current income, sense of humour. No subst. abusers, press only. Ph Matt 708-405-2591

Wanted: fem vocalist proficient in guitar/bass. Must have own transportation, equip. Ph Doug 450-5459.

Today and After seeks drummer. Must have own gear, be committed, have drive. Practice 3-5 times/wk. Ph 974-6276.

Guitar player wanted for cover/orig proj. wanting to play gigs/record in the future, ph 686-1686

Bass player wanted: for recording/writing projects-100% commitment load, various styles-buddhead100@hotmail.com Ph 468-1686.

Singer/songwriter: for rec. proj. all styles welcome buddhead100@hotmail.com Ph 468-1686

Working classic rock band looking for fem. vocalist. Stage presents imp. exp. not nec. Kcs 780-4952-5717.

Deadcast need lead guitar player, serious enq., own gear. Inlt: Slayer, Death, Cradle of Filth Ph Don 455-5489/999-0096 (after 6)

Looking for musicians for a tribute band. 910-7045.

volunteers

Volunteers needed for Kids University. Help with the literacy and numeracy sessions, field trips Ph 429-5701.

Volunteers needed for The Bell City Chase Series Edmonton May 29 2004! Kristy Whitelaw Volunteer@citychase.com, Liz (780) 962-5232, cell (780) 920-6582

The Edmonton International Street Performers Festival: seeking Edmonton citizens to become "super streetfest 2004 volunteers in Old Strathcona's McIntyre Park and Theatre District. July 9-18. Ph 425-5162.

World Partnership Walk Registration on-line by visiting worldpartnershipwalk.com or by calling 452-9555.

VOLUNTEER TUTOR! CAN YOU READ THIS? Many can't! Become a tutor and share the gift of reading. Call P.A.L.S. at 424-5514 to help change a life through literacy. Training and materials are provided.

Edmonton Pride Week Society (EPWS) is seeking volunteers for our **Pride Festival** events June 18-27. Call Lance at 469-2038 or L.D.A@telus.net to register your offer or your group.

Volunteers needed: The Devonshire Care Centre looking for people to volunteer with our residents, bistro and gift shop. Opportunities in recreation, OT/PT, nursing Ph 666-8050 ext 3200.

HELP A REFUGEE FIT IN
Help someone new become welcome. Become a Host Friend volunteer to a newcomer in Canada. No second language required, not a live-in program. Call the Host Program at 424-3545.

Check out the Easter Seals ON LINE AUCTION at <http://auction.edmonton24hours.com> for some great items. Bid and support Alberta's Easter Seals March of Dimes.

Community Justice Ministries, a program of Mennonite Central Committee Alberta is looking for anyone over 18 to volunteer to play softball, soccer or other sports once a month with prison inmates who are very eager for opportunities to interact with members of the community. Women contact Suzanne Gross 422-9377. Men contact Gary Garrison 908-6292.

Help immigrants learn English in a conversation program, grammar and writing program, and youth programs at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Day and Evening positions available, weekdays only. Volunteers ages 16 and up contact Suzanne at 423-9677 sgross@emcn.ab.ca

Needed—Generous Givers (no needle required. **Canadian Blood Services** is looking for enthusiastic people to join its volunteer team. We have flexible shifts available days, evenings and weekends. If you are looking for a rewarding experience that will help save lives, ph 431-8740.

Volunteers needed for The Bell City Chase Series
In Edmonton May 29. Go to: www.citychase.com or call day life version of TV's SURVIVOR, FEAR FACTOR, THE AMAZING RACE, rolled into one! Volunteers receive T-shirt, hat, Post-race party fun! Contact: Kristy Whitelaw - volunteer@citychase.com or ph Liz 962-5232/920-6582 (cell)

Calling Theatre Lovers! Volunteers needed for national theatre festival June 9-19. Call Cathy at Magnetic North Theatre Festival 492-8802. www.magneticontheatrefestival.ca

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in need of volunteers to help in our office with reception and other light office duties. For more information call Belinda 423-4102.

The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton is in need of volunteers to take calls on our 24-hour Crisis Line. The hours are self-determined and you can work from your own home. Contact Heather at 423-4102.

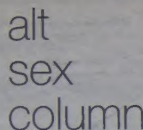
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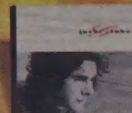
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